

Israel seizes 4,000 PLO passports

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Israeli officials seized 4,080 unauthorised passports issued by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) just before they were smuggled out to Jordan on Thursday for Palestinian pilgrims bound for Mecca, the army said. The passports, seized by Israeli officials at the King Hussein Bridge, bore the names and photographs of residents of Arab East Jerusalem and still-occupied areas of the West Bank, an army spokesman said. "We see this as a sharp violation of the (1993 Israel-PLO) accord on self-rule in Gaza and Jericho, which allows the Palestinian Authority to issue passports only to residents of the self-rule areas," said the spokeswoman for Oren Shahar, army policy chief for the occupied territories. She said the passports were confiscated from a representative of the Islamic trust which oversees Muslim sites and religious affairs in Jerusalem. She said the representative tried to smuggle the passports to Jordan "to distribute them there to residents of the West Bank and Jerusalem making the Haj pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia." PLO officials were not immediately available for comment.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation

جordan تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالإنجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية - الرأي

Jordan praised at ophthalmology meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid, president of the Jordanian Eye Bank Friends Society, returned home on Friday after heading Jordan's delegation to the third Arab ophthalmology conference held in Marrakesh, Morocco under the patronage of King Hassan II. Prince Ra'd, who chaired several sessions at the conference, said the Jordanian delegation presented several papers at the conference on Jordan's achievements in ophthalmology. Participants in the conference praised Jordan's experience in the field of making available corneas to those needing them. On the sidelines of the conference, Prince Ra'd said he met with Secretary General of the Arab-Ophthalmologists Council Prince Abdul Aziz Ben Ahmad Ben Abd Al Aziz of Saudi Arabia and discussed fields of cooperation between Jordan and Saudi Arabia. He said he also met with the Moroccan health minister and the governor of Marrakesh. The conference presented Prince Ra'd and Prince Abdul Aziz the council's shield in appreciation of their efforts in helping the blind in both Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

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Pharmacists elect association head

AMMAN (Petra) — Abdul Rahim Issa was elected Friday as president of the Jordan Pharmacists Association for a two-year term. Three pharmacists were competing for the president's post, which Mr. Issa won after scoring 475 votes in the second round of elections which took place on Friday. The runners-up won 284 votes while the third candidate won 232 votes. The number of eligible voters for the elections were 1,520.

Israel TV reports Safi 'infiltration'

TEL AVIV (AP) — Armed men sneaked into Israel on Friday and threatened factory workers with a pistol before a security guard opened fire and wounded him, television reports said. The army said it was checking the incident. Second Channel TV said the infiltrator was a 19-year-old who came from the town of Ghor Safi and sneaked across the border just south of the Dead Sea. The report said the infiltrator planned to carry out an attack in Israel. The man entered a magnesium factory near the desert city of Sodom and threatened workers with his pistol, the report said. The workers ran away and alerted a security guard who opened fire, shooting the man in the leg.

Rabin: Satellite to improve intelligence

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel launched its Ofek-3 satellite last week because it needs better intelligence in the face of growing extremism, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said in remarks published Friday. "We wanted to reach the ability of a satellite that can give us information," Mr. Rabin told the Haaretz daily in an interview. It is widely believed that Ofek-3 is a spy satellite, though Israel never acknowledged this. Ofek reportedly passes over some of Arab countries, including Syria and Iraq. Mr. Rabin said Israel needed to think ahead in a changing Middle East. "I don't know what kind of situations we will face in the future, where the enemies will be, whether they will necessarily be enemies who are close by," Mr. Rabin said. He cited as an example the possibility that Algeria, which has taken some steps in the nuclear field, could come under militant rule. "If there won't be international activity against extremist Islam... I want to have a potential in the field of intelligence, beyond what we can achieve with our current means," Mr. Rabin said. "At least we will have the potential to make decisions that can be implemented in a short period of time."

Shah's son wants Israel's help

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The late Shah of Iran's eldest son, Reza Pahlavi, has called for Israeli help to topple the Islamic government in his country. Yediot Acharonot reported Friday, "Israel can convince Arab countries with which it has made peace and other countries to support our action against the ayatollahs' regime," the exiled prince told the paper in an interview. Persian broadcasts on Israeli radio could play an important role because many Iranians listen to Israel's news programmes, he said. Reza Pahlavi said he had met Israeli officials but declined to name them.

Manila turns over suspect to U.S.

MANILA (R) — The Philippines has handed over to the United States a foreigner reportedly linked to the alleged brains of the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Centre in New York, President Fidel Ramos said on Friday. The suspect, Abdul Hakim Murad, was turned over to U.S. officials in Manila on Wednesday to face trial in the United States.

U.N. approves limited Iraq oil sales plan

Aziz criticises U.S. role, but does not reject proposal outright

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — Iraq on Friday gained U.N. permission to sell oil to buy food, medicine and other supplies for its people who are suffering under United Nations sanctions.

Iraq immediately raised doubts that it would accept the offer, accusing the United States of blocking a "workable" approach. But it did not reject the plan outright.

The U.N. Security Council unanimously approved a draft resolution on the oil plan, which constitutes a temporary lifting of some sanctions.

If Baghdad accepts the renewable plan, it would mark the first major breach in the wall of crippling sanctions erected after Iraq's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

The resolution was drafted by the United States and Britain and also sponsored by Argentina, Oman and Rwanda.

American U.N. envoy Madeline Albright, speaking after the vote, stressed the resolution was "not a lifting of the sanctions on the Iraqi regime, but a humanitarian exception to the sanctions for the benefit of the Iraqi people," with whom she said one could had no quarrel.

If Iraq refused to implement the scheme, she added, it would only be because it "does not know to take yes for an answer."

Irqi Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz said efforts

"to reach a resolution that could be workable and clear of biased political motivations have been blocked by the U.S."

He accused the United States of conducting a "public relations campaign" while actually seeking to keep sanctions on Iraq and infringing on its sovereignty.

In a statement issued at the United Nations, Mr. Aziz also accused Washington of rushing Security Council negotiations on the plan.

"I regret that the positive and sincere efforts we made throughout the last 10 days, and the efforts made by a significant number of the members of the council to reach a resolution that could be workable and clear of biased political motivations have been blocked by the United States," Mr. Azz said.

It is quite clear to the members of the council that the United States did not intend in pushing the resolution to help alleviate the humanitarian hardships in Iraq.

The U.S. exercise was on the one hand a public relations campaign, and on the other a deliberate effort to jeopardise the prospects of lifting the whole economic sanctions and to infringe on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq.

"It was also quite clear to the members of the council that this resolution was

Israeli soldier wounded in Lebanon

MARJAYOUN (AFP) — An Israeli soldier was seriously wounded Friday when Hezbollah guerrillas fired mortars at his position in South Lebanon, Israel's army said.

The soldier was flown by helicopter to a hospital in northern Israel after the attack in Rihan in the central sector of Israel's self-declared "security zone," the South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia said.

A dozen mortar shells landed on or around the Israeli position.

In a statement issued in Beirut, Hezbollah said its fighters fired at "enemy concentrations in Rihan and inflicted casualties among their ranks."

Meanwhile, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) came under harsh criticism Friday after some of its officers attended joint military exercises by Israeli troops and SLA militiamen.

Mr. Ocalan also dismissed as "lies" Turkish claims that its troops had destroyed all PKK bases in northern Iraq.

"Our fighters are de-

ploying in strategic mountains to wage a guerrilla war" against Turkish troops, he said, adding that the Turkish forces had "reached some of our positions on the plains with their tanks."

Mr. Ocalan also told the Arabic daily Al Hayat that he was ready for "unconditional dialogue for a political solution" with Turkey, but was equally ready for a "Jihad" or holy war against Ankara.

The PKK leader said he favoured a "voluntary federation or any other negotiation plan."

But if violations of the Kurds' national rights continued they would be "justified in conducting a jihad in the name of humanity and Islam."

Turkey will quit Iraq in weeks, Inonu says

VOUΛΙΑΜΕΝΗ, Greece (Agencies) — Turkish Foreign Minister Erdal Inonu said on Friday Turkey would pull out of northern Iraq in a matter of weeks.

Witnesses said hundreds of troops were moved to the region from Tunceli town.

Four PKK guerrillas were killed in a clash near Ovacik town, the officials said.

Turkey has been under pressure from its Western allies to give a date for the end of its military operation against Kurdish guerrillas in northern Iraq, now in its 36th day.

"The state must protect its citizens. It can't tell its citizens we can't protect you because our friends are testing," Mr. Inonu told reporters on the sidelines of a meeting of the 11-member Black Sea economic cooperation group.

U.S. officials have said Turkey should announce a date for withdrawal from northern Iraq before Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller leaves for the United States on Saturday. She meets President Bill Clinton on Wednesday.

Turkish troops on Friday killed 19 Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) rebels in northern Iraq and at least nine in eastern Turkey, military officials reported.

Anatolian news agency quoted the army's general staff as saying 19 PKK rebels were killed in northern Iraq and that over the past 24 hours two soldiers had been killed and two wounded.

The military report said 446 PKK rebels had been killed and 12 captured since Turkey launched its cross-border operation on March 20. It did not give figures for overall army casualties. Officials on Thursday said 43 soldiers had died since March 20.

Military officials in eastern Turkey told reporters that nine guerrillas were killed and five Turkish soldiers wounded in fierce clashes in Turkey's Tunceli province on Friday.

They said five members of

the PKK were killed and five soldiers were wounded in a clash near Hozat Town. Six Turkish helicopters struck rebel positions despite heavy rain.

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Israeli soldiers check their weapons at a closure of Palestinian territories ahead of a Jewish holiday (AFP photo)

Arafat cool to truce, says all must respect Oslo deal

GAZA (Agencies) — Members of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Hamas from Gaza agreed to a truce on Friday but PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat refused to accept it without a Hamas commitment to stop attacks on Israelis from its self-rule areas.

The U.N. offers aims to deflect criticism by Iraq and other countries that ordinary Iraqis are suffering from the sanctions.

Chances for lifting sanctions, which include a ban on oil sales, dimmed this after U.N. weapons inspectors said Iraq may be making germ warfare agents.

But Italian Ambassador Francesco Fulci told the council that a suffering child in Iraq is "no different" than one in Somalia — both deserve humanitarian relief.

Oil, he sold at fair market value, would begin flowing only after Secretary-General Boutros Ghali reports on negotiations with Iraq on details of the plan.

These would cover arrangements for U.N. monitoring of the oil deals and to ensure that food, medicine and other essentials bought with some of the proceeds reach all sectors of the Iraqi people.

"It is a new development for the worse," said Hamas member Imad Falouji. "If we reach an

agreement with the authority it will not mean we will respect the Oslo agreement," he told Reuters.

Mr. Arafat, who heads the self-rule authority in Gaza and Jericho, was visibly angry when he talked to reporters hours after receiving a joint communiqué issued after the PLO-Hamas meeting.

"Nothing has been reached at all," he said.

"First of all, they have to respect what has been agreed upon," he told reporters.

"This peace agreement (with Israel) was signed in the name of the PLO as the sole representative of Palestinians everywhere and every organisation has to respect it."

"It is not allow any political group to work without prior official licence, in line with the construction and pertinent laws, provided that it renounced violence."

Israel insists that the target date agreed on is July 1, not June.

Hamas leader Mahmoud Al Zahar and about 20 members of his organisation and other opposition factions took part in the 90-minute meeting with PLO leaders to hand him the draft.

However, Islamic Jihad was absent as most of its members in Israel for reaching an

agreement on an Israeli troop pullout from West Bank towns was the "last chance" for the two sides.

"We have some promises that June will be the date (when agreement will be reached)," he said. "June is not so far. We gave many chances, and June is the last chance."

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Interior Minister Salameh Hammoud summoned Mr. Ghoshe, a Jordanian citizen, on Wednesday to warn him against issuing statements which could "harm another state," international agencies reported.

The Muslim Brotherhood criticised the move.

"This is an irresponsible act tantamount to hijack operations," it said in a statement.

The Brotherhood also condemned as "oppressive" a crackdown on militants by Mr. Arafat's self-rule authority since Sunday's bombings.

Hamas, meanwhile, objected to Jordan's rebuking its officials in Amman and said it hoped the Kingdom would refrain from such acts in future.

In a statement issued in Jerusalem, Hamas said:

"We in Hamas hope that this unfortunate incident will not be repeated in the future particularly since the movement represents the hope of the nation and is in the forefront in defending it against the fierce Zionist aggression."

(Continued on page 7)

Rabin ready to remove colonies as part of final agreement

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israel will dismantle some Jewish settlements in its final peace accord with the Palestinians, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said in an interview published Friday.

Mr. Rabin has been reluctant to talk about his plans for the West Bank and Gaza Strip under a final peace agreement with the Palestinians. His statements Friday marked the first time he spoke about dismantling Jewish settlements in such an area.

Talks on the final status of the West Bank and Gaza are scheduled to begin in 1996.

However, implementation of stage two of the five-year interim phase — Israeli troop withdrawal from West Bank towns and Palestinian elections — has been delayed

because of a rash of attacks by militants on Israelis.

In opinion poll released Friday showed that most Israelis want to halt or suspend the autonomy negotiations with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) after a double suicide-bombing in Gaza.

The Dabat institute poll in Yediot Acharonot newspaper said 38 per cent wanted a halt to the peace process and 31 per cent a suspension.

Only 30 per cent backed Mr. Rabin's decision to plough on with the negotiations while one per cent gave no opinion, showed the poll of 507 people.

The poll, with a margin of error of four per cent, was carried out on Tuesday and Wednesday after the attacks near two Jewish settlements in Gaza which killed eight

Dozens of students were injured.

As community leaders were attempting to settle the crisis, clashes erupted again on Wednesday when nearly 10 people described as non-students by witnesses entered the campus and started a fight which left three students injured.

The prime minister urged students to exercise restraint and settle the differences sparked by the events.

2 Home & Middle East News

JORDAN TIMES, SATURDAY, APRIL 15, 1995

U.N. report casts doubt on Iraq statements

UNITED NATIONS (UNSCOM) — The U.N. Special Commission overseeing the destruction of Iraqi weapons (UNSCOM) says that its long-term monitoring and verification system is in place, but it cannot yet assure the Security Council that Baghdad is no longer a threat to the international community, U.N. officials and diplomats say.

It will be some time, they note, before all of Iraq's facilities, equipment and imports are being watched closely enough to make such assurances.

UNSCOM Chairman Ambassador Rolf Ekeus submitted a written report to the council April 10 and then met with council members on April 12 and 13, responding to questions about how and why UNSCOM can be confident that Iraq's future capabilities in each of the banned areas — chemical, biological, nuclear, and ballistic weapons — can be watched without lapses by the United Nations.

U.S. Ambassador Madeleine Albright said April 12, following a meeting with Mr. Ekeus, that the United States has "the highest confidence" in UNSCOM's work.

She pointed out, however, that the problem is with Iraq's lack of compliance and not the Special Commission.

"Ambassador Ekeus noted that the monitoring regime cannot be substantively effective because Iraq has not cooperated yet in major areas... The most disturbing fact is that Iraq may well have produced biological weapons which remains unaccounted for," she said.

UNSCOM's problem with the long-term monitoring, Ms. Albright said, is that "it does not have some of the baseline material (from Iraq) to make it effective."

Speaking with reporters after one private meeting with the council, Mr. Ekeus said that "we have no reservations on the mechanism that is in place and functioning along in a very satisfactory way. Our problem is, of course... that we have some items in the biological area which are not accounted for and we are not able to control these capabilities. Therefore, in a substantive sense, there are still some shortcomings."

The formal, written report to the council said that Baghdad did not provide complete information on its biological weapons programmes or account for all the items related to those programmes. UNSCOM said Iraq imported "very large quantities of complex growth media," used to grow bacteria for germ warfare, and has failed to provide a satisfactory accounting of the purposes and use of the growth media.

"With Iraq's failure to account for the use of these items and materials for legitimate purposes, the only conclusion that can be drawn is that there is a high risk that they had been purchased and used for... acquisition of biological warfare agents," the UNSCOM report said.

The report also said that

the chemical weapons monitoring system is now operational, but that new information provided by Baghdad in March is being reviewed in light of Iraq's claim that significantly reduced quantities of chemical warfare agents were produced.

"Iraq now declares that it produced 290 tonnes of chemical weapons agents less than previously stated," the report said.

Mr. Ekeus said that "before we had a reasonable material balance of precursors compared with finally produced chemical agents for warfare purposes. Now when they lowered the numbers, we will have questions about what happened on the other side. That creates a very complex situation."

He said the United Nations is now contacting chemical weapons experts around the world "so we can get a broad international scientific group coming in a few weeks' time to work over all this data to get an answer" to what the changes mean.

Although Iraq claims that all of its chemical weapons equipment was destroyed during the Gulf war, UNSCOM said in its report to the council that it has been unable to verify that claim independently and "cannot definitively account for all the equipment of concern."

UNSCOM said that its experts visited 57 chemical sites; 17 universities, colleges and research institutions (to assess their research potential); and five military storage depots (because of their potential to store chemical weapons). UNSCOM said it expects that the number of chemical sites monitored will increase with the development of Iraq's chemical industry.

Asked about reports that Iraq is continuing research in nuclear weapons, Mr. Ekeus said that there is "enough concern to continue to explore this issue and that, fundamentally, is up to the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) to explain."

In the meantime, UNSCOM and the IAEA, which is overseeing Iraq's nuclear capabilities, have plans to set up a special export/import mechanism to monitor future sales or supplies for Iraq's nuclear needs that could be diverted to a nuclear weapons programme once the sanctions against Iraq have been lifted, according to the UNSCOM report.

The whole scheme rests on a system of notifications made by Iraq and the governments of exporters of the so-called "dual purpose" items to Iraq. It would become operational as soon as it is approved by the Security Council and will begin handling the nuclear items while the U.N. Sanctions Committee supervises the remainder of Iraq's imports.

The planning began 18 months ago with a series of conferences attended by international experts, U.N. officials and experts from those governments that have had wide experience in exporting goods to Iraq prior to the imposition of sanctions.

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The air embargo, which



EQUESTRIAN SPORTS: Her Royal Highness Princess Alia Bint Al Hussein on Friday hands over prizes to winners of equestrian competitions which were held at the Hussein Youth City's equestrian field. The festival included a

1,200-metre and 1,600-metre horse racing competitions in addition to jumping exercises. The festival was organised by the Royal Jordanian Society for Arab Horses in cooperation with the Equestrian Federation.

U.S. warns Turkey EU deal could be lost

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States has told Turkey that its bid to join the European customs union probably will be defeated if the vote took place now because of opposition to Ankara's incursion into Iran, a senior U.S. official said on Thursday.

The official also acknowledged inherent difficulties in a U.S. policy which relies on Turkey's efforts to end cross-border rebel attacks by encouraging rival Iraqi Kurdish factions to settle their differences.

He briefed reporters on condition of anonymity after a trip to Turkey by Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott and Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke.

Their talks in Ankara underscored the administration's heightened focus on Turkey as Europe's post-cold war security frontline and helped prepare the ground for a visit to Washington next week by Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller.

The United States, while

less publicly critical than other North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) allies, has made clear that Ankara's decision to send 35,000 troops into Iraq on March 20 to wipe out Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) bases has damaged Turkey's standing in the international community and must be ended soon.

This point was reinforced by Mr. Talbott and Mr. Holbrooke, who stressed to Ms. Ciller the importance of the next six months as the runup to a vote by the European Parliament on Turkey's long-sought bid to join the European Union (EU) customs union, a prelude to full EU membership.

But the officials came away with no commitment as to a specific target date for Turkey to withdraw its troops from Iraq, something U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has said should be announced before Ms. Ciller's U.S. visit.

Turkish officials in Ankara

repeated assurances that the operation would be over in a

few weeks, but that "duration is something we're not 100 per cent clear on," the official said.

He said Mr. Talbott and Mr. Holbrooke told Ms. Ciller "the most important diplomatic objective is to have the European Parliament approve the customs union that was approved by EU nations" in March.

"It is our judgement based on our soundings in Europe that if the European Parliament were to vote today, that customs union would be defeated," said the official, who added that Ms. Ciller did not dispute that statement.

The official also said Mr. Talbott and Mr. Holbrooke stressed the need for Turkey to move forward with a democratisation programme which has been held up in parliament.

There have been civilian casualties due to Turkey's incursion, but these are inevitable in such operations and "we have no reports of any major disasters," the official said.

State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said Thursday the United States has told both the Dutch and Turkish government that Washington opposes the creation of a parliament-in-exile for the PKK.

"We have seen the reports that the PKK parliament-in-exile will be meeting in the Netherlands," he said. "We think that the PKK is a brutal terrorist organisation, and we obviously don't support the creation of any kind of parliament-in-exile that is associated with the PKK. We've made those views known to both governments in the last 24 hours."

Mr. Burns said it was his understanding that the people who will be meeting have not violated Dutch law and therefore there weren't "any grounds to deny them the right to meet. But I do want to reaffirm that it's our position that this is a brutal terrorist organisation, and we obviously don't support the convening of a parliament of this nature in any way."

Libya defiant after 3 years of sanctions

NICOSIA (AFP) — U.N. sanctions on Libya enter their fourth year on Saturday with Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi still laughing in the face of Western demands and now vowing to bust the air embargo.

Foreign experts and diplomats based in Tripoli said Libya can hold out against the West as long as U.S. oil exports which bring in \$9 billion a year remain unaffected by the sanctions.

Not only has Libya refused to hand over two suspects wanted for the Lockerbie bombing in December 1988, but last month Colonel Qaddafi pledged to fly Libyan pilgrims to Mecca for the annual pilgrimage.

A U.N. ban on international air travel was slapped on Tripoli on April 15, 1992 to force Libya to hand over either Britain or the United States the two suspects accused of bombing of a U.S. plane which blew up over Lockerbie, Scotland, killing 270 people.

The same applies to banned oil equipment such as refining parts.

"Libya has stockpiled spare parts that would keep

also bans the delivery of plane parts, was coupled with military sanctions and broadened in late 1993 to include a ban on some equipment for the oil industry that provides 90 per cent of Libya's income.

Libya has also refused to cooperate with France seeking to question four Libyan officials about the 1989 bombing of a French plane that left 170 people dead.

Expatriate workers in Tripoli say Libya has managed to foil the embargo by buying spare parts for its Boeing 727 fleet through third parties and being prepared to buy four times the normal price.

"Libyan Arab Airline planes have kept on ensuring internal connections, although the frequency of the flights has considerably decreased," a diplomat, who asked not to be named, told AFP in Cyprus by telephone.

The same applies to banned oil equipment such as refining parts.

"Libya has stockpiled

its oil industry running for two years, unless a major accident happens, in a refinery for example," a Western oil firm official operating in the Eastern Desert said.

But Tripoli's drive to build up its reserves of spare parts requires large sums, which affects the budget, he added.

As one diplomat put it, Col. Qaddafi "is anything but predictable."

Inflation has been steadily rising, shown by the fall of Libyan dinar on the black market where it is now worth 30 cents, compared with \$3 at the official rate, said Tripoli residents.

Despite a threat earlier this year by the United States to impose a full oil embargo, Tripoli remains confident that countries with stakes in Libyan oil such as Italy, Germany and Belgium will oppose any such plans, the diplomat said.

So Libya has pressed ahead with plans to break the air embargo.

Calls have been issued via the official media to volunteer for the Mecca flights and Friday prayers have been dominated by the issue, residents said.

But there are doubts about how serious Tripoli is, even though the official agency JANA said more than 1,000 people have already volunteered.

As one diplomat put it, Col. Qaddafi "is anything but predictable."

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Ghez Abdullah 884286

Dr. Yousif Sammour 663254

Dr. Nasser Ibrahim 625335

Dr. Khalid M'addi 743300

Firdos pharmacy 661912

Ferdous pharmacy 778336

Al Asmaa pharmacy 670505

Makrokh pharmacy 623672

Al Salam pharmacy 636730

Yasmin pharmacy 649445

Shamsiyyah pharmacy 637630

Najib pharmacy 847632

Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power Company 635681

IRRID: Dr. Mohammed Al Hilu 279773

Alquds pharmacy (—)

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Moderate and sunny weather conditions will prevail with temperatures rising further. Winds will be northerly moderate and becoming southerly moderate in the afternoon. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church, Sweileh, Tel. X10740

Assembly of God Church, Tel. 632785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590.

PRAYER TIMES

Fajr 05:42

Sunrise Duha 07:03

Dhuhr 12:36

Asr 14:12

Maghrib 18:48

Isha 21:29

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

06:20 Vientiane (OS)

11:10 Damascus (AZ)

12:10 Rome (AZ)

18:20 London, Berlin (BA)

19:20 London, Paris (BA)

21:40 Paris (AF)

22:20 Larnaca (CY)

23:20 Amsterdam (KL)

23:30 Cairo (MS)

Other Flights (Terminal 1)

07:25 Beirut (RJ)

08:00 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)

12:15 Brussels (RJ)

12:20 London, Berlin (RJ)

12:25 Paris (RJ)

12:30 London, Paris (RJ)

12:35 Geneva, Madrid (RJ)

12:40 Paris (RJ)

12:45 London, Paris (RJ)

12:50 London, Berlin (RJ)

12:55 Paris (RJ)

13:00 London, Paris (RJ)

13:05 London, Berlin (RJ)

13:10 Paris (RJ)

13:15 London, Paris (RJ)

Japan mounts huge clampdown on sect on 'disaster' eve

TOKYO (R) — Japan mounted an unprecedented crackdown Friday on the doomsday cult linked to nerve gas attacks last month after its leader warned that an even more terrible disaster was about to strike Tokyo.

In Japan's largest peacetime security operation, about 100,000 police officers — more than a third of the nation's force — descended on dozens of buildings owned by the cult and imposed heavy security checks across the capital.

Police acted on the eve of what the leader Aum Shinri Kyo (Supreme Truth Sect) prophesied would be a day of catastrophe for Tokyo, more chilling than the Kobe earthquake in January which killed more than 5,500 people.

In another mark of the nervousness gripping the country, executives announced they would close two major shopping centres Saturday in response to the apocalyptic prediction from Aum guru Shoko Asahara.

U.S. military forces radio urged Americans in Japan to take care when going over the weekend.

Asahara forecast an event would take place Saturday, possibly an earthquake, "that will make the Kobe earthquake seem as minor as a fly landing on one's cheek."

The sect claims Asahara, who has also said the world will end in 1997, predicted the devastating Kobe earthquake.

Asahara remained in hiding, too ill, his spokesman said, to appear in public to answer charges against a cult subjected to almost daily policy raids following the March 20 sarin nerve gas attacks on the Tokyo subway system.

A police spokesman said in a television interview that authorities were preparing an arrest warrant for Asahara. He did not specify the charges.

Police say they have arrested a total of 107 sect

members since the subway attack on charges including abduction, illegal confinement and traffic offences.

But they have not openly linked the group to the attack, which killed 11 people and made more than 5,000 ill. Aum has denied any link with the attack.

"With all these arrests, it feels like the second coming of a police state," said Aum spokesman Fumihiro Joyo.

Mr. Joyo said Asahara's prophecy of a new disaster was based on his astrology studies and that Aum posed no safety threat.

"Please rest assured that Aum Shinri Kyo will not be taking any action," Mr. Joyo said in a television interview.

In Friday's raids, there were tense scuffles between Aum believers and riot police, who dragged cult children kicking and screaming from their parents.

At the sprawling Aum compound at the foot of Mt. Fuji, west of Tokyo, where earlier police raids turned up

the ingredients of sarin, 53 children aged between three and 14 were taken away in vans to the custody of a nearby nursery.

Many of the children wore the electronic headgear the cult is believed to use to brainwash followers. NHK public television said many of the children were malnourished.

Believers, slim and pale from the fasting their religion demands, frantically tried to bar police from buildings and screamed of religious suppression to watching news crews.

At the same time, police put Tokyo under blanket security until Sunday, checking cars, questioning occupants and choking still further the capital's notoriously busy traffic.

Guards stood at some major subway stations while loudspeakers on trains warned passengers not to touch any suspicious package left on trains or at stations.



An unidentified member of Aum Shinri Kyo (Supreme Truth) is escorted out of the sect's Tokyo headquarters building before police began searching. Japanese police launched a massive simultaneous search of all 130 buildings belonging to the sect, which is linked to the March 20 nerve gas attack on the Tokyo subway (AFP photo)

Actor-singer Burl Ives dies at 85

ANACROTES, Washington (AP) — Burl Ives, who made classic recordings of folk songs like The Blue Tail Fly and defined the role of Big Daddy in the movie Cat On A Hot Tin Roof, died Friday morning at 85.

Ives died at his home, where he had slipped into a coma early Wednesday, said his agent and longtime friend, Marjorie Schickartz Ashley. He had been suffering from complications of mouth cancer, Ives' wife, Dorothy, and her three adult children were with him.

Young man, he picked up songs and stories and sang with the likes of Josh White and Woody Guthrie. Ives chronicled that era in a 1948 autobiography Wayfaring Stranger, written when he was just 36.

At the end of the depression he was in New York City, trying to crack the big time with a passel of homegrown favourites like Goober Peas, My Gal Sal and The Blue Tail Fly, which has the chorus "Jimmy crack corn (and I don't care)."

Roaming the country as a

U.S. Communist Party 'spied for Kremlin'

NEW YORK (R) — The American Communist Party, often portrayed as being only a propaganda arm of the Soviet Union, is accused in a new book of something far more sinister — running a spy network for the Kremlin.

The book says the network, operating in the United States in the 1930s and 1940s, penetrated the project that built the atomic bomb and such government agencies as the State Department and the forerunner of the Central Intelligence Agency, the Office of Strategic Services.

Based on newly discovered documents in Soviet archives, "The Secret World of American Communism" says that two of the U.S. party's longtime leaders, Earl Browder and Eugene Dennis, assisted Soviet espionage in the United States by recruiting spies or helping in the penetration of government agencies.

The book, by U.S. historians Harvey Klehr, John Earl Haynes and Russian Friedrich Fuerst, also says that Moscow spent millions of dollars supporting the party. It says such well-known Americans as industrialist Armand Hammer and radical journalist John Reed, author of Ten Days That Shook The World, were used to ferry the money from Moscow to the

United States for the party. In Reed's case, the book says that in 1919 he brought nearly a million dollars in jewels into the United States to help pay for the start-up of the party.

The documents were discovered in the archives of the Comintern, the organisation responsible for foreign Communist Parties. They included the papers of the U.S. Communist Party that had been shipped to Moscow for safekeeping.

Among the documents are ones referring to "brotherhood" network that cooperated with Soviet agent Vasily Zubilin, who was in charge of breaking into the Manhattan Project.

Also mentioned is a spy code-named "Louis" whom the authors have identified as Morris Cohen. According to the book, he recruited an unnamed scientist at the Manhattan Project and then acted as a courier from Los Alamos, New Mexico, where the bomb was developed. The authors said Cohen was alive but very ill in Moscow.

The book also corroborates parts of the testimony by ex-Communist Whittaker Chambers about a spy ring that operated in Washington during President Franklin Roosevelt's administration and obtained classified State Department documents.

Vandals behead statue of naked queen

CANBERRA (R) — Vandals beheaded a controversial sculpture of a nude Queen Elizabeth in Australia's capital. Canberra police said the head of the statue was still missing and nobody had claimed responsibility or demanded a ransom for its return, a police spokesman said Friday. A nude statue of the queen's husband, Prince Philip, sitting beside her on a park bench appeared untouched, he said. The rusting ferro-concrete sculpture of a flabby naked queen and her paunchy husband sitting together on the park bench beside Canberra's Lake Burley Griffin outraged Australia's monarchists, who want the British ruler to remain head of state. The concrete queen sat, wearing only a tiara on her now missing head, with her legs clamped tightly together and her arms resting on her lap while the stone Prince Philip sat back casually with his legs wide open. The work, titled Down By The Lake With Liz And Phil, is part of a month-long outdoor sculpture exhibition approved by the National Capital Planning Authority (NCPA). The NCPA is a federal government body chaired by an avowed republican. Monarchs, who want the sculpture removed, accused the NCPA and sculptor Greg Taylor of pursuing Prime Minister Paul Keating's republican agenda to change the constitution and dump the queen as head-of-state by the year 2001.

China panda loan criticised

GLAND, Switzerland (R) — The Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF) sprang to the defence of its famous emblem, the giant panda, and criticised a Chinese decision to lend a wild-born panda to a zoo in Berlin. Yan Yan, a nine-year-old female, is due to arrive in Berlin Friday under an agreement between the city and Chinese authorities. But WWF said the loan and a similar loan to a zoo in San Diego, California, could harm attempts to re-establish the panda, an endangered species of which only around 1,000 remain in the wild. "WWF fears that approval of these loans could set a dangerous precedent and lead to a further depletion of an already fragile wild panda population," the organisation said in a statement.

Mr. Klehr said he was taken aback by the "recklessness" of the U.S. Communist Party to get involved in spying, and Mr. Haynes said: "I am greatly surprised at the extent of the cooperation with Soviet intelligence. I had previously thought the party was used as a recruiting ground but did not expect to see it so directly involved."

While the newly discovered documents link the spy network with penetrating the super-secret Manhattan Project that built the first atomic bomb, both men said in separate interviews that they had not uncovered any evidence regarding Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, the U.S. left-wingers who were executed for stealing atomic secrets for the Russians.

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White House may close Pennsylvania Avenue

WASHINGTON (R) — Reeling from a suicide plane crash, gunfire and the shooting death of a knife-wielding homeless man, the White House is considering closing the historic Pennsylvania Avenue that fronts the mansion. Spokesman Michael McCurry said Monday that the Secret Service had issued a plan for closing the wide, tree-lined street to traffic and that the Treasury Department was reviewing it. It would be an unprecedented step for the White House, which has always kept its doors open to the public. And shutting off the busy street, which boasts the executive mansion on one end and the Capitol on the other, could cause some serious traffic jams. But last year, the White House was besieged with attacks. While President Bill Clinton escaped harm, the Secret Service has had many a sleepless night since. In September, a pilot crashed his small plane into the lawn just in front of the east wing of the mansion before security even knew he was in the area. The pilot was killed but no one else was injured. Then in October, a gunman opened fire on the front of the White House, discharging some two dozen rounds before two passers-by wrestled him to the ground. Again, no one was hurt in the attack. But security agents were so rattled by the events — which also included the discovery of several bullets near the southern facade — that when a homeless man wielded a knife near the fence on Pennsylvania, police shot and killed him.

Without treaty, 40 countries might have A-bomb — U.S. official

WASHINGTON (AP) — If not for the landmark non-proliferation treaty, 40 countries might have atomic weapons today, instead of the five that admit it and the few believed to have them, a top U.S. disarmament official says.

John Holm, director of the State Department's Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, defended the treaty ahead of next week's international conference on whether to extend the pact. The Clinton administration is pushing

Clinton backs Russia trip

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bill Clinton defended his trip next month to Moscow, arguing that the gesture could work to resolve the mounting differences between the two countries.

"What interest would it serve for me to stay at home when, by going there and continuing to engage the Russians, we might make progress," he said in a CNN interview to be aired later Thursday.

Mr. Clinton's decision to attend the May 9 ceremony to commemorate the end of World War II has come under fire because of the Russian crackdown on the breakaway republic of Chechnya and Moscow's sale of nuclear technology to Iran.

"I will continue to work on the Iranian thing," said Mr. Clinton, whose administration has asked Moscow to drop the sale of nuclear reactors to Iran and warned that it would seriously strain U.S.-Russian ties.

"Obviously if they do this, it will affect our relationships with them," Mr. Clinton said, noting that the United States had been a big backer of the country's economic reform efforts.

The president noted that the civilian light water reactors slated for the sale were like those North Korea has agreed to use instead of the

19 charged in raid on Philippine town

IPI. Philippines (AP) — Police have filed murder, arson and other charges against 19 renegades from the country's largest Muslim rebel group in connection with the raid on this Christian town in which 53 people were killed, officials said Friday.

One of the 19 is a Roman Catholic, according to police Chief Inspector Willy Dangane. All but two remain at large after the April 4 raid, in which the market district of Ipi, a town of about 50,000, was burned down.

Security has been heightened throughout the southern Philippines to prevent attacks during Easter week services. Travellers reported numerous checkpoints on all major highways in Mindanao, second largest of the 7,100 Philippine islands, which contains Ipi.

Charges of murder, kidnaping, arson, robbery and attempted murder were filed Thursday with the local regional trial court.

Balloon sellers and ice cream vendors ringing handbells added to the carnival atmosphere as hundreds of foreign and local visitors descended on hot and dusty San Fernando to watch a gory re-enactment of Christ's execution, an annual fixture in Asia's only Catholic country.

The crowd — many spattered with blood from the scuffles of the "penitentiya" roared their approval as four-inch stainless steel nails were hammered through the hands of those being crucified.

Organisers howled their disapproval at cameramen jostling to get the best shot of the nails going in and police men broadcast warnings against pickpockets.

The president did not mention Chechnya, but before the White House agreed to participate, Moscow vastly scaled down the military element of the ceremony in order to prevent any political embarrassment.

Simpson prosecution witness accused of lying

LOS ANGELES (R) — One of O.J. Simpson's lawyers accused a key prosecution witness of lying and making up facts, while transcripts of a meeting between the judge and a dismissed juror revealed racial conflict within the jury.

Jeanette Harris, a 38-year-old black employment counselor who was booted off the jury by Judge Lance Ito last week, described in an in-chambers meeting held Wednesday a panel so split along racial lines that jurors shopped, exercised and watched movies separately.

She said tensions escalated to the point where the sole female Hispanic juror could not bear even to breathe the same air as a black juror.

With the trial running for three months and the prospect of another five or six months to go, the specter of mistrial looms large. Six jurors have already been dismissed and only six alternates are left.

The jury consists of eight blacks, three whites and one Hispanic. There are four black alternates, one white and one Hispanic.

In court, defence attorney

12 Filipinos crucified as town celebrates Easter

SAN FERNANDO, Philippines (R) — Twelve people were crucified, scores fainted their backs into a bloody mess and beer and burger vendors did a roaring trade as this Philippines town celebrated Easter with a vengeance Friday.

Balloon sellers and ice cream vendors ringing handbells added to the carnival atmosphere as hundreds of foreign and local visitors descended on hot and dusty San Fernando to watch a gory re-enactment of Christ's execution, an annual fixture in Asia's only Catholic country.

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"It's very weird," said Lucas Knol, from Nieuwleusen in the Netherlands.

For many Christians, Easter is the most solemn event on the calendar, the time when the son of God suffered death on the cross as an atonement for the sins of the world.

Filipinos, however, are among the world's most accomplished throwers of parties and are not noted for their solemnity.

"I thought it would be more religious," bemused tourist Magdalena Rucker, 27, from Ontario, Canada, shouted to a reporter above the din.

"It's very weird," said Lucas Knol, from Nieuwleusen in the Netherlands.

I think for the Filipino Catholics it's a great show, I don't know what it means for foreigners. I think for them it's a show also," said Rudi Jacks from Stuttgart.

As a warm-up to the main event, scores of penitents — all men — wishing to purge themselves of sin line up to have wounds inflicted on their backs by assistants wielding paddles studded with broken glass.

Many are already scarred from previous purgings.

Chernobyl closure will end Ukraine's grim legacy

KIEV (R) — Ukraine has agreed to close down the Chernobyl nuclear power station by the year 2000, bringing in sight an end to one of the grimmest legacies of the country's Soviet past.

Ukrainian and European Union (EU) officials said Thursday that President Leonid Kuchma had told an EU delegation it would shut down two reactors still functioning at the plant, site of the world's worst nuclear accident in 1986.

In exchange, it asked Western countries to help finance schemes to bridge the gap created in Ukraine's energy network — Chernobyl produces five per cent of the country's power.

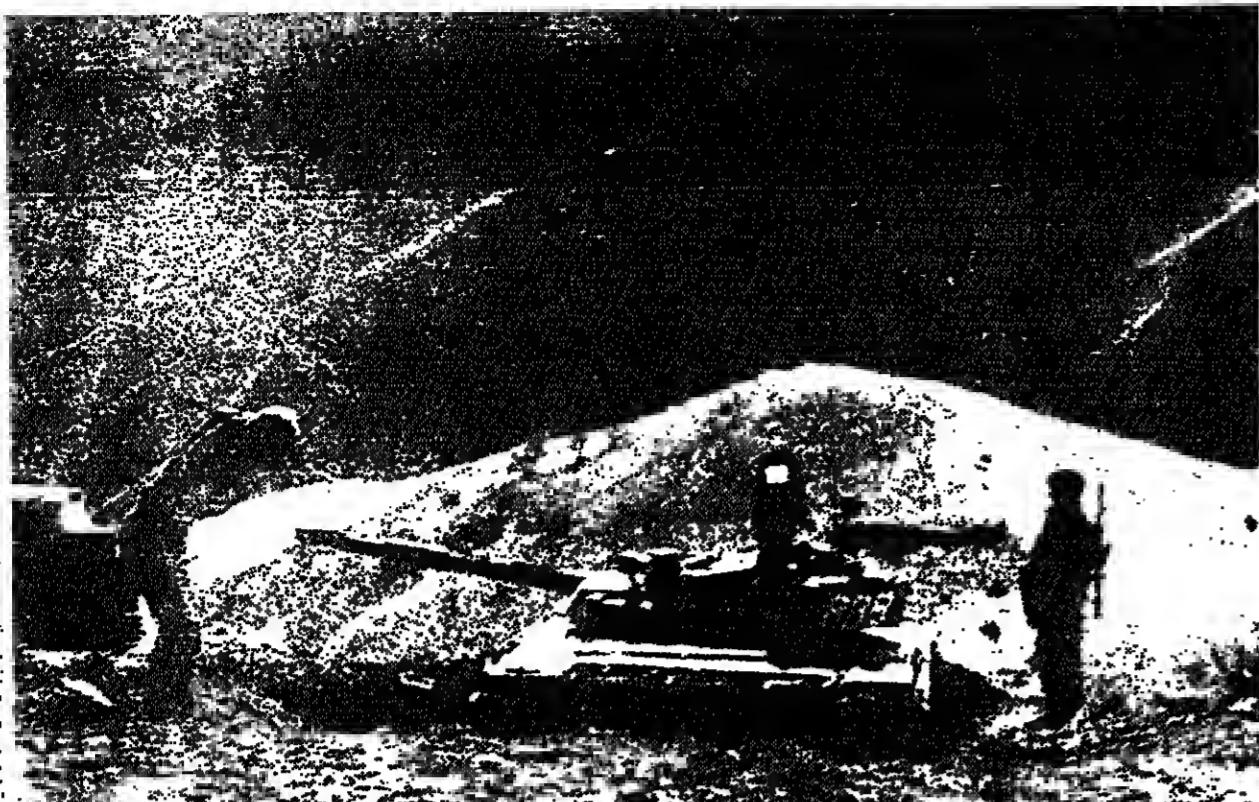
"This is the first time that the Ukrainian authorities have clearly announced a date for the final and full closure of the Chernobyl site," French Environment Minister Michel Barnier, representing France's EU presidency, told a news conference.

Ukrainian officials said they had proposed construction of a thermal station near the stricken plant to make up for lost electricity. Chernobyl's director put the cost of replacement at \$4.4 billion and said the West should help pay it.

Mr. Barnier said the Kiev government was to draw up a concrete timetable by May 15 for bringing Chernobyl's reactors out of service. He said the fire and explosion in Chernobyl's fourth reactor on April 26, 1986 caused upheaval just a year into Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's perestroika reforms.

After remaining silent about it for two days, Soviet authorities provided full details in the first concrete example of "glasnost," or openness.

Thousands of volunteers, known as "liquidators," hurriedly built a rail line and poured sand and concrete from helicopters to build a concrete "tomb" around the blazing reactor. That tomb is now cracking and is to be replaced.



A file picture of a Russian Border Guard of the 12th frontier Post digging a shelter for a tank as a colleague

Yeltsin urges action as Tajik death toll mounts

DUSHANBE (R) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin renewed his calls to boost defences on the Tajik-Afghan border Friday as the death toll in fighting between Frontier Guards and rebels continued to mount.

"Dozens of people were reported killed in the latest

flare-up of fighting in the remote eastern region of Gorno-Badakhshan, where opposition forces based there and Afghan-based Islamic rebels have been staging attacks.

Tajik Deputy Security Minister Anatoly Kuptsov told a news conference that

30 Islamic opposition fighters and six Commonwealth of Independent States Border Guards were killed in three hours of battles Thursday.

Dozens of rebels and 35 Border Guards have been killed in earlier clashes.

ITAR-TASS news agency said two Tajik soldiers were shot dead on the outskirts of the capital Dushanbe early Friday.

Mr. Yeltsin Thursday backed sending military aid to Tajikistan after a new clash in which Mr. Kuptsov said a 100-strong opposition unit attacked a convoy on its way to Khorg, the administrative centre of Gorno-Badakhshan.

Mr. Kuptsov said this week's escalation of fighting was provoked by a clampdown from Frontier Guards in the Panji of Badakhshan.

"The (Yeltsin) suggested making maximum use of the means and forces available to defend the border, if necessary bringing in collective peacekeeping forces," ITAR-TASS quoted the president's press service as saying.

Interfax News Agency said CIS foreign ministers, along with defence ministers and border guards commanders, were due to meet on April 21 to work out joint measures.

And in the Kazakh town of Chimbek Friday, the presidents of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan met behind closed doors to discuss what they could do to quell the fighting.

In Afghanistan, government sources and witnesses said Russian jets bombed the northern town of Taloqan and a border district Thursday, killing 125 civilians and wounding 250 in the fourth day of bombing in two provinces on the Tajik border.

Russia has denied all such accusations. On Friday Inter-

fax quoted the Russian Armed Forces' press office as saying: "Russian aircraft did not bomb Afghan territory."

The fighting on the border breaches a ceasefire agreed last year between Dushanbe and opposition leaders who fled to Afghanistan after losing a civil war in 1992.

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"The main channel for smuggling arms and fighters was there. In one case last year 100 people crossed the border. But now we have closed the border," Mr. Kuptsov said.

Interfax News Agency said talks between Dushanbe and opposition leaders would take place in Moscow on April 17 and 18.

A Tajik opposition leader said Thursday his party would only agree to talks in Moscow if Border Guards withdraw from the frontier and Moscow recognises a ceasefire signed last year.

He said it banned all troop deployment in Gorno-Badakhshan.

"If these three conditions are not met, the negotiations will have to take place somewhere other than in Moscow," Abdur-Nabi Satarzade, president of the opposition Democratic Party of Tajikistan, told Reuters by telephone.

PARIS (R) — Conservative Paris Mayor Jacques Chirac stretched his lead in the French presidential campaign Friday despite a threat by extreme-right Jean-Marie Le Pen to boycott him in the decisive run-off ballot.

Mr. Le Pen, credited with 13 per cent of the vote in the latest opinion polls, told a rally in Toulouse his anti-immigrant National Front Movement would not give the Paris mayor a single vote, because he was a "traitor" and a closet Socialist.

"If by misfortune Jacques Chirac reaches the (May 7) second round of this election, he has grounds to be worried because he will not get a single vote from the National Front," he said.

Nevertheless opinion polls

have suggested almost half of Mr. Le Pen's electorate

would switch to Mr. Chirac in the run-off.

The latest opinion survey — published two days before a blackout on polls takes effect in the run-up to the April 23 first round of voting — pointed to a run-off between Mr. Chirac and Socialist Lionel Jospin, which the Paris mayor would easily win.

The IFOP poll for the daily Liberation credited Mr. Chirac with 26.5 per cent ahead of Mr. Jospin on 21 and Prime Minister Edouard Balladur, a Gaullist like Mr. Chirac, on just 17.5.

Mr. Balladur's score was close to his lowest in the campaign, suggesting his chances are fading despite an unusually high number of undecided voters, estimated at 33 to 39 per cent.

Communist candidate Robert Hue, surfing on a wave of labour unrest, held the biggest rally of any candidate so far in the Paris suburb of Le Bourget on Thursday night.

Organisers said more than 20,000 people turned out to hear Mr. Hue, credited with nine per cent in the IFOP poll, proclaim: "Let's put our struggle into the ballot boxes. Each (Communist) vote will say: enough unemployment, enough injustice."

Mr. Chirac hammered home his own message that France is in social crisis and must do more to combat unemployment, poverty and homelessness.

At a rally in the Champagne capital of Reims, he denounced "a France of inequalities where money goes to speculators and wheeler-dealer businessmen... where salaries are too low for those whose work is their vocation: nurses, social workers, magistrates, teachers."

The Paris mayor called for a better balance between capital and labour with effort and rewards more evenly distributed.

Russian Border Guards from the 8th Frontier Post in the Tajik Pands region patrol the Tajik-Afghan border (AFP photo)

Portugal objects to EU fish deal with Canada

BRUSSELS (R) — European Union (EU) ambassadors broke off crucial talks Friday on settling a bitter fishing row with Canada after Portugal refused to accept the share-out of the EU's catch.

"A lot of progress has been made and we hope to complete the progress very quickly," said a Spanish diplomat. Another diplomat said: "We could reconvene at any time."

But a German diplomat said he was sceptical about

the chances of the ambassadors meeting again Friday, opening up the possibility that the talks would drag on through the Easter weekend.

Diplomats said the ambassadors were in touch with their governments over the latest hitch in the long drawn-out efforts to resolve the row with Canada over fishing for Greenland halibut (turbot) off Newfoundland.

Portugal frustrated final agreement in a dispute over how an increased EU quota of the fish, the last commer-

cially viable species in the once-rich fishing grounds, should be shared out.

"We are against the deal. We must still solve the quota problem," a Portuguese spokesman told reporters when asked if Lisbon would hold up the deal.

Portugal could in theory be outvoted by the other 14 EU states, but EU sources said this was unlikely to happen as it would create more problems.

The EU and Canada said Thursday they were on the

verge of a deal after unused quotas awarded to Russia and possibly other non-EU states were reallocated to Spain, but not to Portugal.

Spain and Portugal, the only EU countries fishing the area, were previously offered 10,000 tonnes of a total quota of 27,000.

The figure, divided up on the basis of 80 per cent for Madrid and 20 per cent for Lisbon, represented a large decrease for both sides on the amount they took in 1994.

N. Korea said to give ground in nuclear talks

BERLIN (R) — The United States and North Korea have postponed further talks to anchor a key nuclear agreement until Tuesday, but appeared to have made some progress towards ending a wrangle over the supply of nuclear reactors.

Replacing Pyongyang's plutonium-producing atomic plants with a safer alternative is central to the accord Washington says will divert North Korea from developing nuclear arms.

South Korean news agency, Yonhap, said Friday North Korean negotiators had put forward proposals in Berlin, which would allow some involvement by Seoul in the supply of new reactors.

U.S. and North Korean officials in Berlin were unavailable for comment.

South Korean media reported the North also wanted to link implementation of the nuclear pact to the signing of a peace treaty with the United States, replacing an armistice agreed at the end of the 1950-53 Korean War.

Pyongyang had ruled out any role for its longtime enemy South Korea in replacing its graphite-moderated reactors with

light-water plants. Light-water reactors produce less plutonium that can be used to make a bomb.

The United States has been pressing Pyongyang to bow to its demands that South Korea should be the main contractor with a major say in the design and construction of the reactors.

Seoul and Japan have agreed to foot most of the \$4.5 billion bill for North Korea's nuclear transition, including energy supplies until the new plants are plugged into the power grid in about six years' time.

The project was agreed under an accord signed by North Korea and the United States in Geneva last October. In return, Pyongyang froze its nuclear programme and halted construction of two big nuclear reactors.

Political analysts have dismissed Pyongyang's threats as part of its negotiating tactics and said it would try to wring maximum concessions from the Americans, not least Washington's agreement to establish diplomatic relations.

North Korea's Communist Party paper Rodong Shinmun reported that Pyon-

yang wanted peace talks with the United States before it implemented the nuclear deal. Seoul's Naewoe Press

has said it will have no part in the project if other reactors are used. Seoul was believed to be covering around 60 per cent of the bill and to make the payout palatable at home; it wants contracts and jobs to go to home-based firms.

But Pyongyang suspects political motives behind the offer. One diplomatic source said Seoul may be looking to future unification of the Korean peninsula and if its reactors are in place in the North it would make an integrated power grid easier to set up.

North Korea wants to wrap up the Berlin talks by April 21 and has repeatedly warned it will tear up the Geneva pact if Washington fails to agree to terms by then.

Some 37,000 U.S. troops are based in South Korea, most of them along the demilitarised zone facing forward elements of North Korea's million-plus strong army.

In 1994 and again this year Washington and Seoul decided to cancel massive annual defensive war games known as Team Spirit to spur the Pyongyang-Washington nuclear talks.

"If this is the case and (North Korea) has made this proposal, then they have given some ground," one

Russian troops close in on rebel stronghold in Chechenya

SLEPTSOVSK, Russia (R) — Russian troops closed in on the last rebel stronghold in Chechenya's lowland Friday, surrounding the village of Bamut after pounding it with shells throughout the night.

The roar of explosions echoed through Sleptsovsk, on the border between Chechenya and Ingushetia, rattling windows and shaking buildings. Sleptsovsk is 25 kilometres from Bamut.

The capture of Bamut would effectively give Russian forces control over all the fertile and industrially-developed areas in northern and central Chechenya, although the rebels have set up bases in southern mountains ready to wage a guerrilla war.

In Moscow, the Interior Ministry said the commander of Russia's defence and Interior Ministry troops in the breakaway region had been removed. A ministry spokesman said outgoing Commander Anatoly Kulikov was "tired" and needed to be replaced.

TASS said a new commanding officer, Gen. Mikhail Yegorov, had been appointed temporarily to cover for Gen. Kulikov's absence. Gen. Yegorov was previously in charge of the Interior Ministry's department dealing with organised crime. The change in military

command lines coincided with a fresh bout of criticism at home of the way Russia has conducted its four-month campaign to crush Chechenya's independence bid.

Chechens say Russian soldiers massacred civilians in the western Chechen town of Samashki last week.

Officials from the International Committee of the Red Cross have said Russian troops killed at least 250 people, using "disproportionate" force to capture the town.

Russia's Interior Ministry has denied the charge.

Moscow's troops have already seized most rebel strongholds in Chechenya, which declared itself independent of Moscow in 1991. Many towns in the breakaway region have been reduced to rubble in shelling and fighting and thousands of people have died.

Correspondents who visited Bamut before the latest assaults said it had been virtually abandoned by residents, although Chechen fighters were holed up in a concrete bunker in a disused missile site.

ITAR-TASS news agency quoted officials at the Russian military headquarters near the border with Chechenya as saying Russian forces had surrounded Bamut Friday, but had not yet entered the village.

Russia plans to sell missiles to U.S.

MOSCOW (R) — Russia plans to sell a batch of ultra-modern surface-to-air missiles to the United States in an unprecedented deal which it hopes to complete next week, a Russian official said Friday.

A spokesman for the central Rosvooruzheniya body which negotiates official arms

Gen. Grachev gave no details on what could have killed or wounded Mr. Dudayev, a former Soviet Air force general who proclaimed Chechenya independent in 1991.

The minister did not name his "unconfirmed sources" for the reports on Mr. Dudayev, Interfax News Agency said.

The Federal Security Service, the successor to the KGB which has been ordered to find and capture Mr. Dudayev, said Wednesday it had no information on Mr. Dudayev — healthy or otherwise.

"I am like you all. We do not have another homeland and I will never run away anywhere," he reportedly said.

On Wednesday, Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev said Chechenya's separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev, who has been missing since Russian forces took control of the Chechen capital Grozny in February, is "either dead or wounded."

Speaking to the press during a visit to a strategic missile site at Irkutsk, Siberia,

enkov said.

"The contract could be sealed next week."

Izvestia newspaper outlined the agreement Friday, saying the deal would be worth \$60 million. Pogrebenko declined to say exactly how much the deal would cost, but said Izvestia's figure was "more or less right."

Mandela fires wife for 2nd time

JOHANNESBURG (R) — South African President Nelson Mandela Friday sacked his estranged wife Winnie for the second time after she was reinstated as deputy minister two days before over a technicality.

Mr. Mandela, separated from his husband since 1992, launched a court action Monday to declare her March 27 dismissal from the government of national unity unconstitutional.

"After due reflection I have decided in accordance with the powers vested in me by the constitution to terminate Mrs. Winnie Mandela's appointment and to appoint Mrs. Brigitte Mabandla to the post of deputy minister of arts, culture, science and technology," Mr. Mandela said in a statement.

Nevertheless opinion polls have suggested almost half of Mr. Le Pen's electorate would switch to Mr. Chirac in the run-off.

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Organic

Matter

Hydrogen

Sulfide

Dissolved

Gases

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Expectations for a parley

POLITICAL PROBLEMS rather than economic factors still stand in the way of the success of the Amman economic conference on the Middle East and North African scheduled for October to 'consolidate the peace process'. The summit has been credited as offering the best assurance yet against reversing the tide of peace in the region. However, the continuing stalemate on the Syrian and Palestinian fronts with Israel threatens the viability of the conference. The only thing that could prevent the repetition of the big disappointment at last year's Casablanca conference is tangible progress on these two tracks. Otherwise, the Amman parley would achieve very little.

No wonder the steering committee of the conference put on a brave face in the wake of its last week's preparatory meeting. U.S. Middle East Coordinator Dennis Ross dubbed the committee's meeting as "very successful," and reminded the international community that "those who have made peace need to see that there are benefits for having done so."

The first clear hurdle in this context is the observation that not all the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict have attained peace. Unless and until peace is regionalised, there can be no serious talk about collecting all economic dividends that can be yielded.

Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin was less sanguine about these prospects when he predicted that "it is unlikely that the Amman conference or any other conference will bear immediate fruit." Perhaps Mr. Beilin was also thinking of the formidable political problems that still face the peace process.

In any case, there are other obstacles that await resolution. For instance, there has been no apparent agreement on the proposed Middle East development bank. The U.S., Jordan and Israel favour the establishment of such a bank, but the European Union (EU) and the Arab Gulf countries seem to be noncommittal. Equally disturbing is the lack of coordination and cooperation between the public and private sectors on the conference's strategy and priorities. The business community in Jordan, for example, has repeatedly expressed their concerns about this flaw. These and other related shortcomings may end up spelling problems for the Amman summit unless a more determined effort is exerted on the political, economic and financial levels.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i daily warned of a possible civil war in Gaza in the light of a decision by the Palestine National Authority (PNA) to register all guns in the hands of the people prior to collecting them. Mahmoud Rimawi said that the Islamic Jihad and Hamas have already refused to comply with the orders and said that they would be willing to stop all military activities once the Israelis have dismantled Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip. The PNA ought to study the situation carefully, and ought to demand that the Israelis pledge to dismantle the settlements in return for collecting the weapons, the writer suggested. He said that the mere presence of the settlements and the occupation forces provided sufficient cause for violence as they represent a provocation to the Arab population. The writer said that the PNA should demand that Israel respect and honour its deals with the Palestinians in return for action to prevent further attacks on Israelis in the Gaza Strip. He said that President Arafat's accusations that the Israelis were trying to provoke a civil war in Gaza were justified, but that Arafat ought to follow up on these accusations by presenting the Palestinian demands to the Israeli government and seeking to bolster national unity.

A COLUMNIST in Al Dustour daily commented on Crown Prince Hassan's call on the concerned authorities to conduct a scientific and objective study of the Jordanian labour market by urging the Labour Ministry to stem the employment of guest workers at the expense of the Jordanian job-seekers. Prince Hassan's call places the Labour Ministry face-to-face with its responsibility towards the presence of thousands of non-Jordanians working in the Kingdom, said Mohammad Daoud. The time has come for the government to re-consider the terms and conditions for employing foreign workers, especially as more and more Jordanians are becoming unemployed; and ought to legislate strict rules on issuing visas except for a minority whose skill is rare and could not be found in Jordan. The time has come for the Labour Ministry to fix the minimum wages of workers because disparity between wages and the lack of rules concerning their rights makes the employer to prefer Egyptian to Jordanian workers. Taking Prince Hassan's statement into serious consideration and acting upon it, said the writer, was bound to help deal with the unemployment issue facing the country.

Jordanian Perspective

Gaza tension throws doubt on peace process

By Dr. Musa Keilan

THE ESCALATING tension in the autonomous Palestinian territories after last week's suicide bombings has thrown the darkest shadow yet over the future of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. For many outside the region it may be an Israeli-Palestinian or Palestinian-Palestinian affair, but it is a serious concern to us in Jordan since it is inevitable that destabilisation on the Palestinian side will have repercussions in the Kingdom.

The question that should be asked and answered is: What can we in Jordan do to arrest the situation? And who can be held responsible for the flare-up that has raised the prospect of an inter-Palestinian war?

Notwithstanding repeated Israeli denials, the doubt would not go away that the black hands of secret Israeli Israeli agencies were behind the April 2 explosion in the Gaza's Sheikh Radwan neighbourhood.

The blast, which killed at least six people in a densely populated area, came too pat to be attributed to an accident or as something engineered by the Palestinian security apparatus.

For one thing, it was too controlled to be an accident, given that the number of casualties was limited; definitely someone took extra care to ensure that not many civilians would be caught in the blast.

Obviously, the reasoning was that high civilian casualties in the explosion would have made things get totally out of control for the Palestinian self-rule authority, something that Israel cannot afford to let happen.

Definitely that scenario also leaves open the possibility that the Palestinian security men were somehow involved in the blast. But then the professional way it was handled was beyond their skills.

So there are unmistakable signs that Israeli hands could have set off the explosion in their intense efforts to avenge Palestinian bombings in Israel and eliminate the so-called

"engineer" — the man who reportedly built many of the Hamas bombs that went off in Israeli cities.

The response that the blast drew from Hamas and Islamic Jihad was not a surprise; it was only a question of when and where. As such, the two suicide bombings in the Gaza Strip last Sunday which killed seven Israelis and one American only underlined that violence begets violence. And that is what we are concerned with, particularly that the crackdown ordered by the self-rule authority and the defiance of the hardline groups appear to be heralding more violence and tension.

There is no magic formula to resolve the problem, which involves unshakeable deep-rooted beliefs on the part of some — who categorically reject any dealings with the State of Israel — and pragmatism on the part of others — who realise the truth that Israel is here to stay and there cannot be any escape from dealing with the Jewish state.

In this context, Palestinian self-rule authority chief Yasser Arafat's message to Jordan to contain the activities of Jordan-based Hamas members and spokesmen was at best short-sighted. Regardless of what action Jordan took in response, the fact remains that the root cause of Mr. Arafat's problems is not the statements issued in Amman by Hamas leaders, but his own approach to the situation.

But Israel cannot shirk from its responsibility. Let no one forget that the latest escalation of violence came amid whisperings among Israelis that let the Gaza Strip become the yearned-for state of Palestine and let the West Bank remain under Israeli occupation with autonomous links with whoever is in power in Gaza.

It was as if the Israelis were waiting for the internal security situation to deteriorate to a level where the world would be seriously alarmed before very conveniently presenting the proposal that, given the inability of the self-rule authority to control anti-Israeli attacks, Israel has

no choice but to put a lid on handing over the West Bank to Mr. Arafat.

Quite simply, it also appears to mean the realisation of predictions in the Middle East and elsewhere at the outset of the autonomy accord signed in Washington in September 1993 that the "Gaza-Jericho first" formula was also destined to be "Gaza-Jericho last."

Adding further support to the theory that Israel handed over Gaza to Mr. Arafat only because it could not control the strip was the refusal by Yitzhak Rabin last week to redeploy Israeli troops in the Gaza Strip. Not that such a move is practical, but it is a sure bet that Israel will not want to send troops to the Gaza Strip even if Mr. Arafat sent an invitation engraved in gold.

Given the overall chaos in the Palestinian-Israeli track of negotiations, it is imperative that the main sponsor of the peace process, the United States, takes a very close look why things are going so dramatically wrong in what appeared to have been a carefully orchestrated scenario when the autonomy accord got off the ground.

While there is no doubt that dramatic solutions are not round the corner, the U.S. and Israel could start with basic change: That change should mean an unequivocal and public undertaking that Israel will withdraw from the West Bank and Gaza completely. The process that should follow such an undertaking could vary depending upon the circumstances, but there cannot be any more ambiguity over the realities of the situation: Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza in 1967 and it has to withdraw entirely from those areas with no preconditions, period.

Such an undertaking, which will clear a lot of distrust in the air, may not be a tailor-made answer to the current crisis, but it is sure to go a long way in shoring up the disappearing Palestinian confidence in the peace process. By extension, it also means that we in Jordan could breathe a little more easily.

Lebanon scarred by war that began 20 years ago

By Andrew Tarnowski
Reuter

BEIRUT — Ten years ago Rashid Keng got up each morning, grabbed his Kalashnikov rifle and walked 50 metres to the green line where he and his comrades fought the Christian militiamen who shot at them from across the street.

"I lived with my family on the front line, so the memories I've got are chilly memories of death, shelling, snipers, thrills," Mr. Keng recalls of his days as a Muslim militiaman during Lebanon's 1975-90 civil war.

This week is the 20th anniversary of the start of the war that ruined Lebanon.

Today, aged 32, Mr. Keng drives a gleaming 500cc Honda motorcycle along the green line, still lined with bullet-riddled houses and collapsed apartment blocks left from 15 years of fighting between Muslim and Christian forces, Israeli shelling and Israeli bombing.

At least 100,000 people were killed, thousands crippled, nearly 500,000 lost

ing. He is thriving as a programme director at Future Television, a Beirut station owned by billionaire Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri, and is married with a baby daughter.

But he says be, like every Lebanese, is still struggling to free his life from the bitter shadow of war.

It erupted on April 13, 1975, when Christian fighters ambushed a Palestinian bus in a Christian suburb of Beirut, killing 22, and then found themselves facing a coalition of leftist, Muslim and Palestinian forces.

The fighting 'sucked in' Syria and Israel, Iran and Iraq, the PLO and a multinational force of U.S., French, Italian and British troops. It spawned a host of militias, hijackers and hostage-takers, and fundamentalist Shiite groups like Hezbollah (Party of God), which became a force on the regional scene.

Up to \$40 billion had fled the once-thriving banking system, the currency was shattered, the famous hotels bombed out, the middle class was destroyed, the poorer classes penniless and the roads, telephones, electricity and services were wrecked.

Five years later, Christian commentators doubt

their homes and 500,000 fled the country.

When it ended Lebanon was no longer a playground for the rich, the Switzerland of the Middle East.

Up to \$12 billion 10 year infrastructure reconstruction plan. He hopes the private sector will chip in with another \$20 billion to build industry, agriculture, tourism and a thriving financial services sector.

Already new buildings have mushroomed across the country and the \$1.8 billion Solideco company is

rebuilding central Beirut. Gleaming luxury cars abound and hordes of expensive restaurants and nightclubs cater to the ostentatiously rich.

But they exist side-by-side with widespread misery. Most refugees are still unable to return to their wrecked or damaged villages, and the friendly village co-existence between communities of Greeks, Latin and Maronite Christians and Shiite, Sunni and Druze Muslims may be gone forever.

In Beirut the poor, the homeless and the squatters rummage in garbage containers and legless war victims risk death beginning from makeshift carts in the road in rush-hour traffic.

For Mr. Keng, too, the bitterness lingers.

"I lost 15 years of my youth and fun, and they were simply replaced by fear, aggression and a corruption state of mind," he says. "I'm trying to make up those lost years by being constructive for a change."

"But every single step taken is directly affected by the war, and I believe every single step any Lebanese is making is affected directly by the war."

In southern Lebanon fighting still rages as Israeli troops occupying a border strip come under daily attack from Muslim guerrillas trying to drive them out.

Shaken by shelling and bombing, the south is the last active Arab-Israeli frontline and the fighting carries the ever-present threat of a flare-up that could engulf the rest of the country.

For Central Bank Governor Riad Salameh, Lebanon's economic recovery is remarkable, but lack of peace is slowing capital inflow and efforts to create a finance and tourism centre.

"If peace occurs and it is a decent one it will take out all the uncertainties about the future of Lebanon.. and will generate a massive movement of capital into the country," Mr. Salameh told Reuters.

LETTERS

Accord or discord?

To the Editor:

THE INFLUX into Jordan of 900 Israeli tourists a day, who presumably have no difficulty in obtaining Jordanian entry visas and who enjoy unrestricted freedom of movement during their stay in Jordan, led me to believe that Jordanians would naturally be accorded reciprocal treatment by Israel. I therefore applied through a licensed Jordanian travel office for Israeli visas for my wife and myself to visit close relatives in West Jerusalem who had invited us to spend the Easter holiday with them.

After the lapse of three weeks (no less) we were informed by the travel office that the Israeli authorities want to know the purpose and duration of our visit, where, or with whom we would be staying, and (believe it or not!) a written undertaking that we would leave Israel at the end of our visit. We complied.

Ten days later we were informed by the travel office that the Israeli authorities want to know the name, the full address, the telephone number, and the business or work of the head of the family with whom we would be staying. We complied.

Five days later we received the final reply that our application for visas was rejected by the Israeli authorities on the flimsy excuse that "we do not qualify as tourists."

It was then that I realised how mistaken I was in believing that after the conclusion of the Jordan-Israeli peace treaty we would be dealing with a different Israel, and that we were at the beginning of an era of peace the benefits of which would gradually seep through to the man on the street (that's me). My only consolation is that my guiltiness in this situation is more than matched by that of Mr. Yasser Arafat signing the Oslo Accord (or should I say "OSLO DISCORD") and his recent public declaration that he would "soon be praying at the Aqsa Mosque". The difference between Mr. Arafat's disillusionment and mine, is that I only have to face my wife for not being able to obtain an Israeli entry visa, whereas Mr. Arafat would eventually have to face four million Palestinians in the diaspora, if he can ever leave the Gaza Strip where he has been entrapped under the terms and conditions of his Oslo Accord.

Every tale should have a moral, and the moral of this sad tale is that:

"It is foolish to act on the assumption that a leopard would change its spots!"

Advocate George Kawar,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

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Features

JORDAN TIMES, SATURDAY, APRIL 15, 1995

By Dr. Musa

process

By Rami G. Khouri
Special to the Jordan Times

LESS THAN sixteen months after they were discovered in the collapsed remains of a Byzantine church at Petra, the important collection of burnt Petra papyrus scrolls has been almost totally conserved and protected by an international team of experts, and is well on the way to being read and analysed by scholars from several countries.

The papyri — the single largest collection of written material from ancient Jordan — are starting to clarify many aspects of social organisation and human traditions in mid-6th century AD Petra, especially related to wills, inheritance, and property ownership.

They are also clarifying the durability of Nabatean Arab culture, which continued to manifest itself in people's names nearly four and a half centuries after the Roman annexation of the Nabatean capital and heartland.

The work on the Petra Papyri, which has been led and coordinated by the American Centre of Oriental Research (ACOR) in Amman, has been exemplary in three important ways: the speedy preservation of such rare ancient manuscripts, which could have been threatened with total disintegration due to their fragile state; the very generous policy of sharing information about the scrolls with other scholars through interviews, press releases and newsletters; and the international fundraising effort that ACOR undertook to raise approximately \$150,000 to date from private and public sources to finance the conservation work.

As such, the work on the Petra Papyri, as they are now popularly called, does not only shed new light on ancient aspects of Jordanian culture and its interaction with foreign lands; it also makes an emphatic statement about what can be achieved today through efficient collaborative efforts among private and public institutions in Jordan and other countries.

The conservation work that has been carried out at ACOR since September 1994 has revealed the existence of about 150 separate scrolls — more than double the original estimate when the cache was first discovered. This number will probably increase as the remaining few bundles of charred rolls are painstakingly separated and reconstructed this summer.

The sheer quantity of script in the scrolls is proving to be a treasure trove of information about life in Petra in the mid-6th century. Over 200 metres of 40-centimetre-wide scrolls have been unravelled to date, revealing documentary texts written by different scribes using a

combination of cursive and angular, formal scripts.

The earliest date mentioned in the scrolls is 538 AD, and the latest is 559 AD — a period of Petra's history that is very poorly documented by excavations or literary evidence.

Dr. Zbigniew Fieira, the archaeologist who headed the excavation of the church and who now works on the analysis of the information derived from the scrolls and related to the reconstruction of historical context, told the Jordan Times in an interview in Amman that "probably the greatest value of these scrolls is the information they shed on the daily life, communal traditions, land transfers, and documentary transactions of the people mentioned in the scrolls — information that is not available from any other comparable source."

These are the only scrolls of their kind ever discovered in Jordan from this period; they are also thought to be the first example anywhere in the world of an archive of ancient papyrus scrolls that was recovered by systematic excavations, during which the place and context of the find were scientifically documented and recorded. The closest comparative material is a collection of papyrus scrolls from the vicinity of a church at Nessana in the Naqah

(Negev) desert to the west, dating from the 6th to the late 7th centuries AD. The Nessana scrolls, which were found intact, included texts on literary subjects (e.g., a Greek dictionary to Virgil's *Aeneas*), theology (fragments of the gospel of John), and non-literary texts related to all spheres of life, such as trade, financial contracts, marriage and divorce, wills, division of property, letters, sales receipts, and military affairs.

About half the Petra texts deal with wills and property inheritance, and over 50 individual names of people have been identified to date. These include a range of men identified by their ranks or titles, including both administrative and ecclesiastical titles (e.g., bishop, deacon, governor, collector of taxes). The texts are dotted with typical Byzantine religious titles of honour, such as very reverend, most pious, and Christ-loving, as well as honorary titles of laymen, such as most magnificent, most admirable (for men) and most decorous (for women).

Several traditional Nabatean names appear among the more common Christian and pagan Greek and Roman (Latin) names. Examples of Greek names are Epiphanius and Kyriakos, and of Latin names Flavius Sabinius and Romanus. Two fragmentary signs-

tures in a language other than Greek (perhaps Semitic) suggest the continued use of non-Greek-Roman local scripts well into the Byzantine era. Names of towns, villages and areas around Petra seem to represent a Greek rendition of names in early Arabic, indicating the importance of early Arabic among local rural folk in the 6th century AD.

The largest scroll opened to date, over 8.5 metres long, is an inventory compiled in 538 AD by a public attorney, listing property owned by the church and by two deceased people named Diphilus (a typical Greek name) and Obodianus, a Hellenised version of the Nabatean names 'bd ('Abdat) and Obadas. The Hellenised name Dusarius also appears several times, clearly reflecting the name of the chief Nabatean male deity Dushara (or Dushara).

One scroll measuring over four metres long is the will of an ailing Obodianus, who directs that his property should pass on to the Church of Saint High Priest Aaron and to the Hospital of Saint Mary [Cyrilicus?], both of which are located in Petra. The apparently terminally ill Obodianus asks that after his death his heirs should keep his mother supplied with food and clothing for

the rest of her life.

A three-metre-long scroll is a sworn declaration related to a division of inherited property, including gardens, vineyards, agricultural land with threshing floors, water cisterns, houses and other assets, while another two-metre-long scroll dated 540/541 AD is an agreement for the sale of inherited property.

Several scrolls mention the names of settlements other than Petra, including Augustopolis (Udrudh, ten kilometres to the east), an unidentified site called Eleutheropolis, and numerous villages, farmlands, threshing floors, water cisterns, roads and streams in the immediate vicinity of Petra. Some of these ancient names have survived until today, such as the name Dara, which ACOR Director Dr. Pierre Bikai has identified with an area near the modern resthouse, at the entrance of Petra, that still carries the name.

The information being obtained about early-to-mid-6th century Petra's people and rural hinterland will help to clarify many vague aspects of late Byzantine Petra's economic and social history, which in turn will fill in major blanks in the history of southern Jordan at that time.

The papyri were found in two archives in the Scroll Room, at the north-east

corner of the church's exterior. The major archive was in the north-west corner of the room, and the smaller archive was found on a collapsed stone shelf against the south wall of the room.

Based on their location associated with the church and their references to people and properties, the scrolls seem to relate to a limited number of people, perhaps parishioners or benefactors of the church. There is no information that seems to relate to the city or the population as a whole. The scrolls were found in what appears to be a storage area, and not a library or office where they were written. One scroll was found lying open, perhaps because it was being read when the church collapsed and burned.

The scrolls seem to have been tightly wrapped in cloth, and were probably placed on wooden shelves or in wooden boxes, judging from the excavated remains of wood, straw, textiles, copper hinges, glass fragments, and small bronze chains. The glass may have been used to decorate inlaid wooden boxes.

The conservation work on the scrolls will finish this summer, after which the Jordanian Department of Antiquities and ACOR will have to tackle the issue of

Arafat cool to Hamas truce

(Continued from page 1)

political leaders are in jail.

The meeting came as Israel started a 10-day closure of the territories to head off any attacks during the Jewish Passover holiday.

The draft declaration calls for the release of all detainees held since the attack, an end to the crackdown and steps towards starting a dialogue between Hamas and the self-rule authority.

An army general warned Friday that Israel may have to revise security arrangements with the Palestinian self-rule authority if militant attacks continue.

Mr. Arafat "does not respect the security accord" signed in May 1994 as part of the deal launching self-rule, said General Shaoul Mofaz, military commander of southern Israel and the autonomous Gaza Strip.

If the peace process is halted, all the Palestinians will unite in a huge effort to carry out attacks.

"We are ready to try all the chances for peace, on condition that we have security at the end of the road," Mr. Rabin said.

Turning to Palestinian efforts to set up a state of their own, he said: "At this stage, I am against a Palestinian state."

"I would like to have had two states, Israel and Jordan, with the Palestinians between

their permanent storage and display. The papyri are safe now in the ACOR conservation lab, with its temperature and humidity controls that are vital to prevent deterioration or disintegration of the thin, carbonised scrolls. ACOR hopes to launch a fund-raising drive to build a permanent storage cabinet with appropriate environmental controls, in which the scrolls can be permanently stored when they are returned to the Department of Antiquities.

ACOR Director Pierre Bikai notes that one of the important principles that ACOR applies in all its archaeological research projects is the proper conservation and preservation of excavated sites and artifacts. ACOR, with financial assistance from USAID and other sources, is building a permanent shelter for the church where the scrolls were found, with its splendid floor mosaics, and its fully conserving the scrolls themselves for posterity.

Dr. Bikai notes that such archaeological projects serve Jordan in several related ways. They generate substantial international publicity for Jordan (over 50 press articles and ten films to date on the church project, including mention by Discover Magazine as one of the world's 75 top science stories in 1994); they provide income for local workers during the life of the project; and they train a growing team of Jordanian technicians in such important fields as conservation of mosaics and perishable artifacts.

The scrolls were excavated by conservator Catherine Valentour and Dr. Fiema, assisted by Deborah Kooring and Department of Antiquities Petra inspector Suleiman Farajat. The excavation was funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The scrolls conservation project has been sponsored and funded by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, ACOR, the University of Helsinki, the Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland, the Academy of Finland, and the University of Michigan, with other contributions made by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Samuel Kress Foundation, the United States Information Agency, Robert Johnston, R.D. Dodge, J. and J. Dumit, Yarmouk University, and the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

Private contributions to the cost of fully conserving and permanently storing the scrolls can be made through ACOR or the Department of Antiquities, and individuals or institutions that make substantial contributions can "adopt" a scroll and have it named after them or any person of their choice. Ten scrolls have been named already in this fashion.

new military tribunal. Last week, two Islamic Jihad followers were sentenced by the secret court to 15 years and life in prison, respectively.

"Our fighters warn the authority against continuing its measures and affirm that they are prepared to respond," said an Islamic Jihad leaflet distributed Friday.

Islamic Jihad published what it said were the names of the three judges sitting on the military tribunal. Security officials had kept the names secret, apparently so the judges would not become targets of revenge attacks.

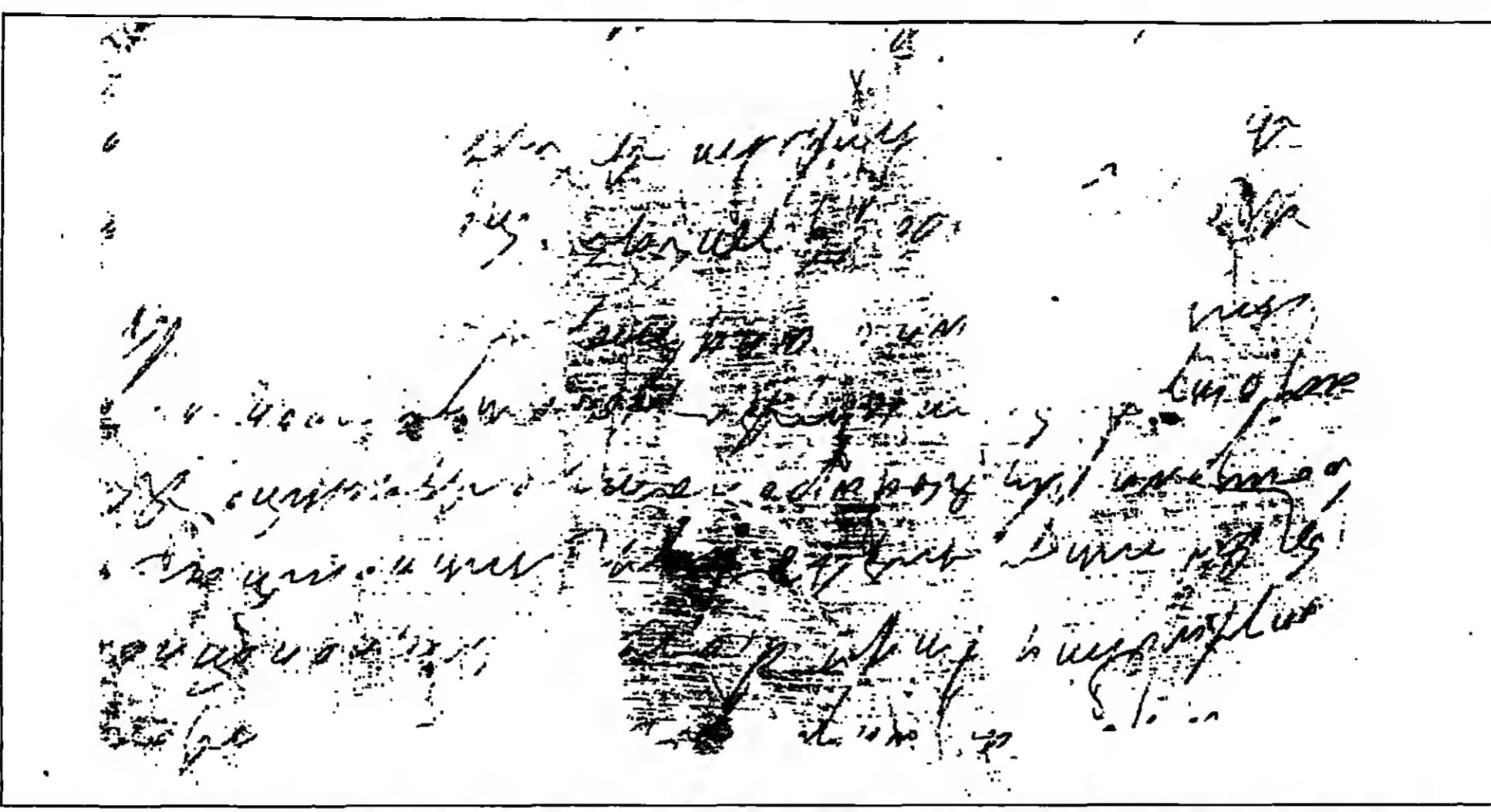
Palestinian police say at least 200 militants have been rounded up in the arrests following the two suicide bombings.

They said about 150 of the detainees were members of the military wings of Hamas and Islamic Jihad, but Hamas sources claimed the figure was inflated.

The meeting with Mr. Arafat was set up with the help of Haidar Abdul Shafi, former chief negotiator with Israel.

"The deal basically is to avert internal conflict," Mr. Abdul Shafi said. "The important thing is that both Fateb and Hamas signed the draft, and Arafat has said he will study it very carefully."

Petra papyrus scrolls, nearly all conserved, reveal late Byzantine social traditions in south Jordan



Part of a Petra papyrus scroll written in a cursive script. The text is the will of a Petra resident named Obodianus who asks that his assets be used to feed and clothe his mother, and that after her death they should be given to a church and hospital at Petra (Photo by Henry Cowherd)

'The sheer quantity of script in the scrolls is proving to be a treasure trove of information about life in Petra in the mid-6th century'

U.N. approves Iraq oil plan

(Continued from page 1)

Iraq, to the Turkish Mediterranean port of Yumurtalik. The rest could be shipped from Iraq's Gulf port of Mina Al Bakr.

To help Baghdad pay the Turkish pipeline tolls it would be allowed to sell an additional \$28 million of oil for every \$1 billion contracted.

China and some non-aligned countries said telling Iraq how it could export its oil infringed on its sovereignty but nevertheless voted for the resolution.

The oil-for-goods scheme is more favourable to Iraq than one it rejected in 1991 permitting only \$1.6 billion in sales over six months. That required the oil to be shipped exclusively through the pipeline to Turkey and more intrusive monitoring of the distribution of food and other goods.

Unlike that take-it-or-leave-it scheme, spurned by Baghdad as an affront to its sovereignty, Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz played an active role in helping negotiate the new resolution, with French, Russian, Argentine and other council members acting as intermediaries.

Following are highlights of the Security Council resolution:

— Iraq can sell \$1 billion worth of oil every 90 days to

\$2 billion over six months to programmes for Kurds in the north.

— The "larger share" of oil is to be shipped through the pipeline to Turkey rather than Mina Al Bakr.

— Iraq will be permitted to import equipment needed to repair the pipeline to Turkey. It may finance these goods through letters of credit on future oil sales.

— Oil contracts need approval by the Security Council's Sanctions Committee to make sure prices are at "fair market value" and that letters of credit are paid to an escrow account so that costs for compensation and U.N. expenses can be deducted.

— Revenues from the limited oil sales are precluded from legal proceedings and any claims against them.

— The resolution should not be a substitute for an eventual lifting of the full oil embargo. Nothing in the resolution "should be interpreted as infringing the sovereignty or territorial integrity of Iraq."

— A sum of \$130 million to \$150 million every 90 days is to go for U.N. humanitarian

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— Oil contracts need approval by the Security Council's Sanctions Committee to make sure prices are at "fair market value" and that letters of credit are paid to an escrow account so that costs for compensation and U.N. expenses can be deducted.

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Confidence is building up at Amman Financial Market

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Prices slipped a little at the Amman Financial Market (AFM) and turnover remained largely steady last week amid signs that the stock exchange is regaining confidence after two months of stagnation, brokers said Friday.

The weekly AFM report said trading for the week ending Thursday was JD 19.7 million, down 9.6 per cent from the previous week's 21.8 million. But the figure was more than double the average weekly trading posted in the first three months of the year, the brokers noted.

The general share price in-

dex based on 60 major companies closed for the week at 145.9 points after shedding 0.6 points or 0.4 per cent.

The separate sectoral indices showed that services and industrial sector shares lost an average of 3.3 per cent and 0.9 per cent respectively during the week, while commercial banks and insurance firms gained 0.2 per cent and 0.4 per cent.

Commercial banks accounted for 56.8 per cent of the weekly volume with a turnover of JD 11.2 million, followed by the services sector with JD 4.7 million (23.9 per cent), industrials with JD 3.5 million (17.8 per cent) and insurance stock with JD 300,000 (1.5 per cent), the

AFM report said.

Shares of 88 companies were traded during the week, when 6.5 million shares changed hands under 6,270 deals. Stocks of 29 of the firms closed the week with gains, while 40 lost and 19 remained stable.

Brokers said bulk transfers of shares among institutions were largely behind the higher volume of business during the week. Over a million shares worth JD 5.8 million of the Jordan National Bank changed hands during the week, including a bulk deal involving 800,000 of the stocks between two institutions, they noted.

They said investor interest remained close on the ser-

vices sector for the second week running after Jordan and Israel signed an agreement on cooperation on tourism in early April.

In general, the brokers said, moves by the government to prompt state agencies to intervene in the market to prop up the prices were working well. The general price index had dipped below the 140-point mark in late March but institutional buyers put stock prices back on track, they said.

"The wheels are now moving in the market after the institutional injection of funds made up for some of the money that disappeared

(Continued on page 9)

Japan rate cut, economic package fail to excite markets

TOKYO (R) — Japan's central bank Friday cut its key lending rate to a historic low of one per cent in hopes of giving added force to the government's attempt to tackle the strong yen with a new package of economic measures.

But the twin efforts failed to fire up either currency or share markets, and some economists said the dollar could challenge new global lows in the not-too-distant future.

The Bank of Japan cut its discount rate by 0.75 percentage point to one per cent, effective Friday.

The long-awaited move came just hours after the government approved a package of emergency economic measures to counter the yen's rise of more than 20 per cent against the dollar this year — a surge which has threatened Japan's economic recovery and battered its feeble stock market.

Many financial market players said they were dis-

appointed with the package, in which the government pledged to try to cut Japan's huge current account surplus, speed up deregulation, boost imports, stimulate the economy and revitalise markets.

But government bureaucrats scuttled politicians' efforts to set a target for cutting the surplus, one step that market players said might have signalled Tokyo was serious about tackling root causes of the yen's rise.

"It's just one enough," said Jeff Young, an analyst at Salomon Brothers Asia. "On the fiscal side there is nothing really there and on the deregulation side, nothing new."

In a sign of the problems still to be addressed, the finance ministry said later that Japan's trade surplus with the United States widened to \$55.66 billion in fiscal 1994/95, which ended on March 31, from \$51.12 billion in 1993/94.

Japan's total 1994/95 sur-

plus, however, posted its first drop in four years, dipping 3.2 per cent to \$117.98 billion.

Japanese government bond futures surged to end at a 15-month high and cash bond prices rose after the discount rate cut triggered sharp falls in short-term money rates.

The currency market, however, turned a cold shoulder to the economic steps and the dollar was little changed in afternoon trade at around 83.65 yen. Dealers were divided about prospects for the dollar, with some betting it may have touched bottom and others bracing for further falls.

Contentious U.S.-Japan talks on trade in cars and car parts, in which Washington is threatening sanctions, could also weigh down the dollar. "The dollar will remain under pressure because the structural dollar surplus on global markets is still in place," said Industrial Bank of Japan senior manager Yasuhiko Matsunaga.

Russia, Greece and Bulgaria to speed up oil pipeline plan

VOULIAGMENI, Greece (R) — Russia, Greece and Bulgaria agreed Friday to speed up construction of a \$700 million pipeline to bring Russian crude oil from the Urals to the northern Greek port of Alexandroupolis.

The 300-kilometre pipeline from the Bulgarian Black Sea port of Burgas will help bring Russian crude closer to Western markets by avoiding loading at the Russian port of Novorossisk and transiting through the Bosphorus.

"We confirmed the intention

of the three governments to speed up procedures for the pipeline project," said Greek Foreign Minister Karolos Papoulias. "Very soon we will have a meeting of experts from the three sides in Moscow and the signing of a protocol agreement," he told reporters.

He was speaking after talks with Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev and Bulgarian Foreign Minister Georgi Pirinski on the sidelines of a meeting of the 11-member Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) group.

The pipeline is expected to boost Greek shipping and the Bulgarian economy, and ease Russian concerns about tough new Turkish maritime rules for oil tankers passing through the Bosphorus.

The plan calls for the underground pipeline with a daily capacity of 600,000 barrels to be complete in 1997. It calls for marine facilities 20 kilometres south of Burgas for unloading tankers and a tank farm with a capacity of

3.8 million barrels. It also provides for a tank farm with a capacity of 7.5 million barrels near Alexandroupolis.

The project is expected to be designed, constructed and operated by a new international company to be set up and registered in Luxembourg, Trans-Balkan Pipeline, S.A.

Among the companies involved are the Russian oil and gas supply company Gazprom, the Greek Latsis Group and Kopeleouzos Group, and Prometheus Gas.

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



Iraqi commodity imports rise via Aqaba

AMMAN (R) — Iraq's state imports of basic commodities via Jordan's Red Sea port of Aqaba rose sharply in the first quarter of 1995 from the same period last year, according to figures released Friday.

The figures, obtained by Reuters from T. Gargour Shipping Agents, showed Iraq's state purchases of four basic commodities on chartered vessels rose 169 per cent from January to March to a total of 233,799 tonnes compared to 86,908 tonnes in the same period in 1994.

Gargour said imports via containers in January and

A sharp rise in wheat imports, from 143,050 tonnes in the first quarter of 1995 from none in the same period in 1994, is behind the rise in total imports of vegetable oil, sugar, rice and wheat.

Bagged rice imports rose to 36,065 tonnes from 10,025 tonnes in the same period last year. However, sugar purchases fell to 54,684 tonnes from 66,485 tonnes. No vegetable oil was imported against 10,399 tonnes in first quarter 1994.

Gargour said imports via containers in January and

February 1995 stood at 3,927 tonnes and 2,742 tonnes respectively compared with 2,131 tonnes and 867 tonnes in the same period last year.

The rise reflects increased trade via private Jordanian traders, said Gargour which handled 32.56 per cent of Iraq's total chartered tonnage via Aqaba last year.

Traders say Iraq's state imports were severely curtailed in 1994 due to a worsening hard currency crisis as a result of a U.N. trade embargo imposed after Baghdad's invasion of Kuwait.

Its purchases of commodities on chartered vessels via Jordan's Red Sea port of Aqaba fell by 75 per cent in 1994 to 313,111 tonnes from 1,265,281 tonnes in 1993.

There is also some unspecified tonnage in reexports to Iraq, mostly container goods imported by Jordanian traders to the Aqaba free zone area that are sold to private Iraqi traders.

Sales of basic commodities to Iraq, while not banned, require a special licence from the U.N. sanctions committee.

Arab development aid tops \$1b in '94

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The Arab League's five main financial institutions provided more than \$1 billion in aid to member states in 1994, bringing their total operations to around \$26 billion, an official report said Friday.

Around \$660 million were extended by the Kuwait-based Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD) while \$255 million were provided by the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF) in Abu Dhabi, according to the official Emirates news agency WAM, which quoted annual reports of those funds.

AFESD loans and technical assistance benefited Egypt, Syria and seven other Arab nations and covered communication, energy, elec-

tricity, water, roads, sewage, industry, mining, agriculture and rural development.

The AMF gave four loans to Algeria and three other members in 1994 to finance economic reforms and tackle balance of payments deficits.

Around \$75 million were extended by the Khartoum-based Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa and \$24 million by the Arab Authority for Agricultural Investment and Development, also based in the Sudanese capital.

The remaining institution, the Kuwait-based Arab Corporation for Investment Guarantee extended credits worth around \$30 million to finance exports and gur-

antee investment in 13 Arab countries.

The total aid provided by the five funds reached nearly \$26 billion and their capital exceeded \$10 billion, according to the annual reports, which were approved by the Arab finance ministers in Muscat this week.

The five institutions were created in early 1970s to finance development in the Arab League's 22 members through extending soft loans and technical assistance. Most members are subscribers to their capital but the bulk of the contributions came from Gulf states and other Arab oil producers.

Another institution, the Abu Dhabi-based Arab Trade Financing Programme

(ATFP), was established four years ago as an offshoot of the AMF.

Its activities include financing flagging trade among member states and it has been involved in setting up an advanced data network to distribute information to Arab producers on regional markets. The fund has a capital of \$500 million and its credits have reached nearly \$344 million.

The annual reports did not include assistance extended by governments in oil-rich member states or funds owned by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, UAE and Iraq. Official figures showed such combined aid have totalled around \$100 billion.

China tackles software piracy at state agencies

BEIJING (R) — China Friday began a drive to purge state agencies of illegally copied software, tackling an embarrassing problem that U.S. publishers allege costs them millions of dollars in lost sales.

In a carrot-and-stick campaign, the government has begun allocating more money for software while the State Copyright Administration vowed to prosecute anyone who makes illegal software copies — whether in the private or state sector.

"If we find a case with enough evidence, whether the violation was done by a government office, a state-run enterprise or the private sector, the person will be punished to the full extent of the law," copyright official Wang Hoapeng was quoted by Xinhua news agency in

needed.

"Intellectual property protection is a long and complicated task that is arduous and urgent," Mr. Li said.

The United States and China signed a major accord in March mandating tough enforcement against intellectual property piracy in China, particularly illegal music recordings and movies on compact and laser disc and counterfeit software.

The resulting enforcement has begun to take effect.

Pirate music CDs have dried up in many street markets, although discs called CD-roms crammed with up-to-the-minute U.S. software titles worth thousands of dollars still are sold discreetly in many bustling technology bazaars.

The Business Software Alliance, an anti-piracy consortium of major U.S. makers, has alleged that despite the risks some government agencies and state enterprises rely heavily on illegal copied software.

It also suggested computer users buy their software from reputable companies to avoid purchasing illegal copies inadvertently from high-quality counterfeiters.

The copyright agency

Thursday announced plans for a nationwide crackdown

on bootleg software, especially that manufactured for sale by pirate companies.

State Councillor Li Tieying, addressing a national anti-piracy meeting, said the war on counterfeiters had seen some successes but that a protracted struggle was needed.

The edict against software copying and allocation of what Xinhua called "large sums" of state money to

assure agencies they can afford software should placate critics who say some computer departments scoff at spending money on software.

It could also invigorate China's own software industry.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY APRIL 15, 1995

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Contact those friends who show originally and gain much from them. Make tonight a happy one at home with your loved ones.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Enthusiasm for your chosen career can make it more efficient today and you gain greater benefits from it.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Study into current trends which can help you to achieve a greater success today. Become more open-minded to current events.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Find better methods through which you can improve your business affairs today, such as computer and the like.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) It would be well to confer with lesser conservative persons which could prove to be both understanding and profitable.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Find the mechanisms which can make your tasks lighter and also save you hours of time in the process today.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) This is ideal today and tonight to get into new kinds of entertainment which may please you very much and be quite profitable.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Something rather serious may happen at home today, but take it in your stride, since conditions there will improve.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) This is a good day to communicate well with others and get the right results. Make new contacts of worth even if it takes effort.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Study into more up-to-date systems and ideas which are best for improving your property and holdings.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You have fine talents and can put them across admirably to others today. Then tonight be with persons who are lots of fun.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) If you do any studying today, it can be of modern ways so that you can get out of that old-fashioned rut.

Birthstone of April: Diamond — Amethyst

THE Daily Crossword

by Melvin Kenworthy

Business & Finance

JORDAN TIMES, SATURDAY, APRIL 15, 1995

Confidence is building up at Amman Financial Market

(Continued from page 8)

from the floor to commercial bank deposits," said a broker, who, understanding market guidelines, cannot be identified.

"Not all the money has come back to the market, but there are good signs that things are moving in the right direction," added the broker.

At the same time, many investors have become more selective and are "concentrating on certain companies in the market, particularly commercial banks which can raise capital without turning to AFM funds," said the broker.

All Jordanian commercial banks are under a Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) directive to raise their capital to JD 20 million before the end of 1996.

While some banks may have opted for mergers or to turn to the market for the extra funds, many others have enough reserves for capitalisation without taxing the liquidity available at the stock exchange.

CJB Governor Mohammad Nabulsi said last week that the central bank had no objections to banks capitalising their reserves to meet the capital requirement.

The governor also said local banks were also free to enter partnerships with foreign banks to raise their capital.

In any case, he said, "we will not be insensitive to the needs of the market.. we will not push all the banks into the market at the same time."

Row erupts over new produce stores

★ MUNICIPALITY of Greater Amman (MoGA) Mayor Mamdouh Abbadi is determined not to back down in the face of opposition from middlemen and traders of agricultural products who refuse to move to the new central vegetable market in Juweidet, behind the grain silos. Dr. Abbadi said the MoGA offered the middlemen a 50 per cent discount on the keymoney bids, if accepted, for the new stores but the traders and the middlemen want the stores free of charge as compensation for leaving the stores in Wihdat. They also want the rent to remain unchanged. Dr. Abbadi counters that it is illogical to provide the traders with stores more than four times as large as their current ones at no cost. Current stores are 40 square metres whereas the new ones are 180 square metres. "They have their stand and we have ours, and we shall remain firm on this subject." Dr. Abbadi said, adding that the traders and middlemen refuse to move to the new market because they want to continue monopolising the business and prevent others from competing with them. "By standing firm we shall break this monopoly," the mayor stressed. However, only 25 bids for the new stores were submitted by the deadline fixed by MoGA and only 16 were found to be legal and in order. Some 70 middlemen and traders who won stores at the current market refused to bid. The MoGA was offering 124 stores for open bidding. The new market, which cost JD 10 million to build and which has a capacity of 220 stores, will meet the needs of Amman until the year 2020 (Al Dastour).

★ THE COST of a telephone call between two cellular phones has been fixed at 185 fils per minute while the cost from a portable cellular phone to an ordinary phone or vice versa has been fixed at 245 fils per minute. According to a top official at the Telecommunications Corporation (TCC) the charges will be reviewed after one year. The official pointed out that the fees and the charges had been fixed at the highest range for one year according to the agreement signed between the corporation and Faslink, the company licensed to operate the portable cellular network. TCC Director-General Walid Dweik says these charges are acceptable, noting that subscribers to this service should be capable of payment (Al Ra'i).

★ THE ARAB Potash Company generated JD 24.4 million in net profits last year, 10.4 per cent higher 1993. The company produced 1,055,259 tonnes of potash, 13 per cent over 1993, and sold 1,516,652 tonnes, 2.7 per cent over in 1993. The Arab Potash Company has awarded an industrial and table salt project to an Italian consortium at a cost of \$20 million and it is expected that trial production would begin in April 1996. The salt plants will have a capacity to produce 1.2 million tonnes of table salt (Al Ra'i).

★ AL NISR Al Arab Insurance Company collected a total of JD 2.27 million in premiums last year, five per cent higher than the amount earned in 1993. The company paid claims of JD 1.97 million. The annual report shows that the company's investments totalled JD 4.2 million last year compared to JD 3.22 million at the end of 1993. Reserves reached JD 3.33 million, six per cent above the figure of 1993. The board of directors is recommending to the general assembly the distribution of JD 200,000 in dividends at a rate of 20 per cent (Al Aswaq).

Turkey, Azerbaijan sign oil deal

BAKU (R) — Turkey's Prime Minister Tansu Ciller and Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev have signed a deal giving Turkey five per cent of Baku's share in an international oil consortium.

Oil sources in Baku said the state-run Turkish Petroleum Corporation (TPAO) was expected to pay Azerbaijan more than \$70 million for the stake until the year 2020 (Al Dastour).

The deal, which will raise TPAO's stake to 6.75 per

cent in the consortium, is subject to approval of other members.

As Turkey signed its deal, Iran protested again at Baku's decision to cancel Tebran's stake in the \$7.4 billion project.

Mehdi Hosseini, a senior Iranian oil ministry official, said Iran would refuse to transport the 100,000 barrel per day initial output of the oilfields if Baku cancelled Tebran's share.

JORDAN MARKET PLACE

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET	
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHMEISANI	
TELEPHONE: 660170 / 662170	
ORGANIZED MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (08/04/1995 - 12/04/1995)	
WEEKLY REPORT	
JORDAN PHOSPHATE MINES	
THE ARAB POTASH/NEW	
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY	
JORDAN TANNING	
THE INDUSTRIAL COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL	
THE JORDAN WORSTED MILLS	
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	
JORDAN DAIRY	
THE JORDAN PIPES MANUFACTURING	
THE PUBLIC WAZA	
ARAB CHEMICAL DETERGENTS INDUSTRIES	
SPINNING & WEAVING	
RAFIA INDUSTRIES	
DAR AL DAWA DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT	
ARAB INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADES	
ARAB ALUMINUM INDUSTRY	
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	
ARAB PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING	
NATIONAL STEEL INDUSTRY	
INTERMEDIATE PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	
JORDAN ROCKSOL INDUSTRIES	
UNIVERSAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	
ALADDIN INDUSTRIES	
JORDAN INDUSTRIES & MATCH/JINCO	
NATIONAL CABLE & WIRE MANUFACTURING	
JORDAN SULFO-CHEMICALS	
ARAB CENTER FOR PHARM. & CHEMICALS	
KAWTHER INVESTMENT	
UNIVERSAL MODERN INDUSTRIES	
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES CO.	
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR	
2795439 INDEX NUMBER: 120.87	
CHANGE: +0.07%	
GRAND TOTAL	
18092700 INDEX NUMBER: 145.85	
PARALLEL MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (08/04/1995 - 12/04/1995)	
WEEKLY REPORT	
COMPANY'S NAME	
TRADING VOLUME	PREV. OPENING CLOSING PRICE
JD	PRICE
ARAB CONTRACTORS	
CENTRAL GENERAL TRADING & STORAGE	
JORDAN TRADE FACILITIES	
ZARIA PRIVATE UNIVERSITY	
UNIFIED CO. FOR ORGANIZING LAND TRANS.	
ARAB FIN INV.CO	
ARAB FOOD & MEDICAL APPLIANCES	
NATIONAL CHLORINE INDUSTRIES CO. LTD	
NATIONAL TEXTILE & PLASTICS IND. CO	
JORDAN NEW CABLE COMPANY	
EZ-ZAY READY WEAR MANUFACTURING CO.	
INTERNATIONAL TOBACCO & CIGARETTES	
UNIVERSAL METALS	
JORDAN STEEL	
ARAB ELECTRIC INDUSTRIES	
GRAND TOTAL	
1626081 INDEX NUMBER: 145.85	
CHANGES	
STUDIO HAIG	
Professional Quality in 1 Hour Service	
Develop your colour film at our shop and get:-	
• JUMBO photo size 30% larger	
• Free enlargement 20 x 30 cm	
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La Coquette	
FRENCH CUISINE ENJOY NEW AVENUE Tel: 674563-674551	
SEASIDE	
LUNCH DINNER 7 DAYS WEEK Tel: 660001-4	
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Sports

JORDAN TIMES, SATURDAY, APRIL 15, 1995

Countdown begins for Jordan International Rally

By Aleen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The countdown has already begun for one of the Kingdom's most prestigious sporting events — the Jordan International Rally — which this season marks its 13th year and is expected to witness some fundamental changes in its format.

At a press conference Thursday held at rally headquarters, the Forte Grand Hotel, rally organisers the Royal Automobile Club of Jordan (RACJ) announced the event would this year be held Thursday the 18th and Friday the 19th of May with a varied group of entries from around the world.

The Jordan International Rally forms the second of the seven-round 1995 Middle East Rally Championship, one of four world regional championships held annually and sanctioned by FIA, the International Motor Sports Federation.

Khalifa Al Muteawi, who finished second in the '94 Jordan Rally behind Mohammad Bin Sulayem, won the first event of the season when he clinched the UAE rally title in bis

Jordan Rally record

1981 Michel Saleh/Lebanon
1982 Michel Saleh/Lebanon
1983 Saeed Al Hajri/Qatar
1984 Moh'd Bin Sulayem/UAE
1985 Saeed Al Hajri/Qatar
1986 Saeed Al Hajri/Qatar
1987 Moh'd Bin Sulayem/UAE
1988 Moh'd Bin Sulayem/UAE
1989 Moh'd Bin Sulayem/UAE
1990 Moh'd Bin Sulayem/UAE
1991 Abbas Mosawi/Qatar
1992 Sheikh Hamad Al Thani/Qatar/Mitsubishi Galant VR4
1993 Sheikh Hamad Al Thani/Qatar/Mitsubishi Galant VR4
1994 Moh'd Bin Sulayem/UAE

off to bad
Davis C

Knicks hand Bullets 13th straight loss

NEW YORK (AP) — Patrick Ewing scored 25 points as the New York Knicks beat Washington 110-100 Thursday night, the Bullets' 13th consecutive loss.

Ewing became the 37th player in NBA history to eclipse the 18,000-point mark.

Charles Smith added 19 points, Hubert Davis 17 and Greg Anthony 16 and seven assists for the Knicks, who pulled within 3½ games or Orlando in the race for the best record in the eastern Conference.

Chris Webber scored 27 points to lead the Bullets, who have not won since beating Cleveland on March 17.

New York led 69-48 before Washington rallied within 76-73 while Ewing sat on the bench with four fouls. The Bullets were within 86-83 with nine minutes to play when the Knicks scored nine straight points.

76ers 102, Nets 94: At Philadelphia, Dana Barros led six 76ers in double figures with 22 points and had 13 assists as the Nets were virtually eliminated from the Playoffs.

Shaun Bradley had 17 points and 12 rebounds for the 76ers, his ninth double-double in his last 10 games. Kenny Anderson had 25 points and Armon Gilliam 21 for the Nets, who are five games behind Boston for the eighth and final playoff berth with five games to play.

The Nets used an 11-0 run to close within 97-94 with 2:31 left, but Bradley scored on a follow with two minutes remaining and a free throw by Derrick Alston at 1:29 secured the victory.

Bucks 85, Cavaliers 84: At Miami, Keith Askins made three free throws just before a scoreless final minute to lift the Miami, which had trailed by 16 points in the third quarter.

Glen Rice led the Heat with 22 points, while Mark Price had 20 points and

Tyrone Hill 18 points and 11 rebounds for Cleveland, which lost its eighth straight road game.

Cleveland led 84-82 when Askins made two free throws with 1:26 left. After a missed shot by Cleveland, Askins made one of two free throws with 1:05 to play for the final points of the game and the Heat's first lead since the opening period.

Miami was 13-for-17 (76.5 per cent) from the field in the fourth quarter, but made only three of eight free throws.

Jazz 121, Warriors 102: At Salt Lake City, Kari Malone had 29 points and 15 rebounds and John Stockton added 22 points as Utah pulled within ½ games of Western Conference-leading San Antonio.

The victory was Utah's 55th of the season, tying a club record set in 1990 and matched in 1992.

Tim Legler had 18 points to lead Golden State.

Utah led 66-54 at halftime and by as much as 96-69 with 25 seconds left in the third quarter. The Warriors would come no closer than 101-84 with eight minutes to play.

Celtics 119, Magic 114: At Boston, Dino Radja scored six of his 29 points in a decisive 13-3 charge down the stretch as the Celtics improved their playoff chances.

With their sixth victory in seven games, the Celtics moved 1 game ahead of Milwaukee for the eighth and final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference.

Sherman Douglas had 25

RESULTS
Boston 119, Orlando 114
Miami 85, Cleveland 84
New York 110, Washington 100
Philadelphia 102, New Jersey 94
Utah 121, Golden State 102
Houston 112, Portland 99
Seattle 133, Dallas 112
Denver 125, L.A. Clippers 103

Agassi, Chang on course for Japan Open clash

TOKYO (Agencies) — Andre Agassi's quarterfinal opponent said he felt like he had run a marathon chasing the angled bullets of tennis' new world No. 1.

Agassi triumphed 6-4, 6-3 Friday against Scott Draper, a 20-year-old Australian who had to win through a qualifying round to get into the \$1.2 million Japan Open.

In Saturday's semifinals, he hopes to give the running test to a more experienced foe — World No. 10 Wayne Ferreira of South Africa, who drubbed Sweden's Jonas Bjorkman 6-3, 6-2 in the quarterfinals.

"It's important that I'm playing my best tennis to win this match because he doesn't have a weakness, but he also can hit some big shots," Agassi said of Ferreira, who has one tournament victory this year, in Dubai, but hasn't beaten Agassi in four meetings.

Agassi has won three tournaments this year, including the Australian Open, and compiled a 29-2 match record through Friday.

Except for Ferreira, Saturday's final four were some of the best of American tennis, with just world No. 2 Pete Sampras — playing in Europe — and No. 11 Todd Martin absent. All four also are baseliners.

No. 2 seed Michael Chang, ranked sixth, faces fourth seed Jim Courier, ranked 15th, in the other semifinal.

Chang survived a second-set match point for a 4-6, 7-6 (9-7), 6-3 victory over Sweden's Jan Apell in 2 hours, 19 minutes.

Courier let a 5-2 first-set lead slip away before putting away Sweden's Thomas Enqvist, seeded fifth, 7-6 (7-4), 6-0.

Against Agassi, Draper served strongly, hit some acrobatic volleys and retrieved well against Agassi's cannonballs, but was broken in the ninth game of the first set after four deuces and again in the seventh and ninth games of the second set.

Draper said he was very nervous two hours before the match, but once it began "I was very happy with my mental attitude. I didn't get too nervous or overreacted."

"I got a lot of experience out of it. I enjoyed being out there," he said.

But, he said, Agassi "hits incredible angles."

Chang and Apell had the crowd of 6,200 oohing and aahing as they went at each other with spin and speed, drop shots and lobs.



Andre Agassi

just 56 minutes to dispose of American Tami Whitlinger Jones 6-2, 6-1, to earn a semifinal berth at the \$430,000 Houston women's tennis championships.

"I felt I was in control of the points," said the top-seeded Graf, who kept her 1995 match record perfect at 16-0. "I was playing pretty aggressive and I think that worked pretty well for me."

"I'm feeling great on clay and I didn't know if I would before the tournament," the 25-year-old German said. "But I've been feeling so good on the court after two matches. I feel in control of the points. I feel like I'm moving well, and have the patience. I'm feeling good."

Graf awaits the winner of the quarter-final clash between defending champion Sabine Hack and 18-year-old qualifier Nino Louarsabishvili of Georgia.

The fifth-seeded Hack overcame the Pesky Moon ball style of American qualifier Enika Delone 6-4, 7-5 to reach the quarters. Seventh seed Sandra Cecchini of Italy and unseeded Wiltrud Probst of Germany also gained the quarterfinals.

Cecchini beat Spain's Maria Sanchez Lopez 6-1, 6-7 (1-7), 6-2, in a two hour, 24 minute baseline battle while Probst defeated compatriot Meike Babel 5-7, 7-5, 6-2.

"Yeah, I won ugly today," said Hack after her one hour, 38 minute struggle. "It doesn't always have to be pretty, I guess. But I'm pretty satisfied."

Hack rallied from down 0-3 in the first set, and 1-3 in the second before besting the 180th-ranked Delone.

"It was pretty frustrating because I haven't played those kind of players in a long time, and she played without pace," said Hack, ranked 28th.

"Usually I play topspin players and it's a hard ball, but that's a lob and kind of slow. So I got really impatient and frustrated, you could probably tell by my body language."

—He has a lot of talent. He hits the ball well." Agassi said.

Agassi said his back hurt during preparations last month for the U.S. team's Davis Cup victory over Italy. was "OK. I just have to be careful with it."

Draper came in ranked 234th in the world, but was set to move up to about No. 180 for his march to the quarterfinals here, which included a first-round upset of American Jonathan Stark, the No. 10 seed.

Draper said he was very nervous two hours before the match, but once it began "I was very happy with my mental attitude. I didn't get too nervous or overreacted."

Against Bjorkman, Ferreira needed only 56 minutes. Two winning sets gave him the break he needed in the third game of the second set and he broke again in the fifth game.

Women's No. 1 seed Kimiko Date, seeking her fourth straight Japan Open title, advanced to the final with a 6-1, 6-2 victory over injured

compatriot Nana Miyagi, the No. 8 seed.

American Amy Frazier, seeded second, meets qualifier Tang Min of Hong Kong on Saturday to decide the other finalist.

Miyagi said she pulled a groin muscle Thursday in her 1-6, 6-4, 6-4 victory over Italy's Rita Grande.

"She (Date) kept me on the run all the time. I wasn't serving great either. ... If I could have run a little better I could have given her a good match."

The men's singles winner receives \$156,000 from total prize money of \$1.2 million. The women's division offers only a \$25,000 top prize.

Graf makes short work of a long night

In Houston, Texas, world No. 1 Steffi Graf made short work of a long night on Thursday.

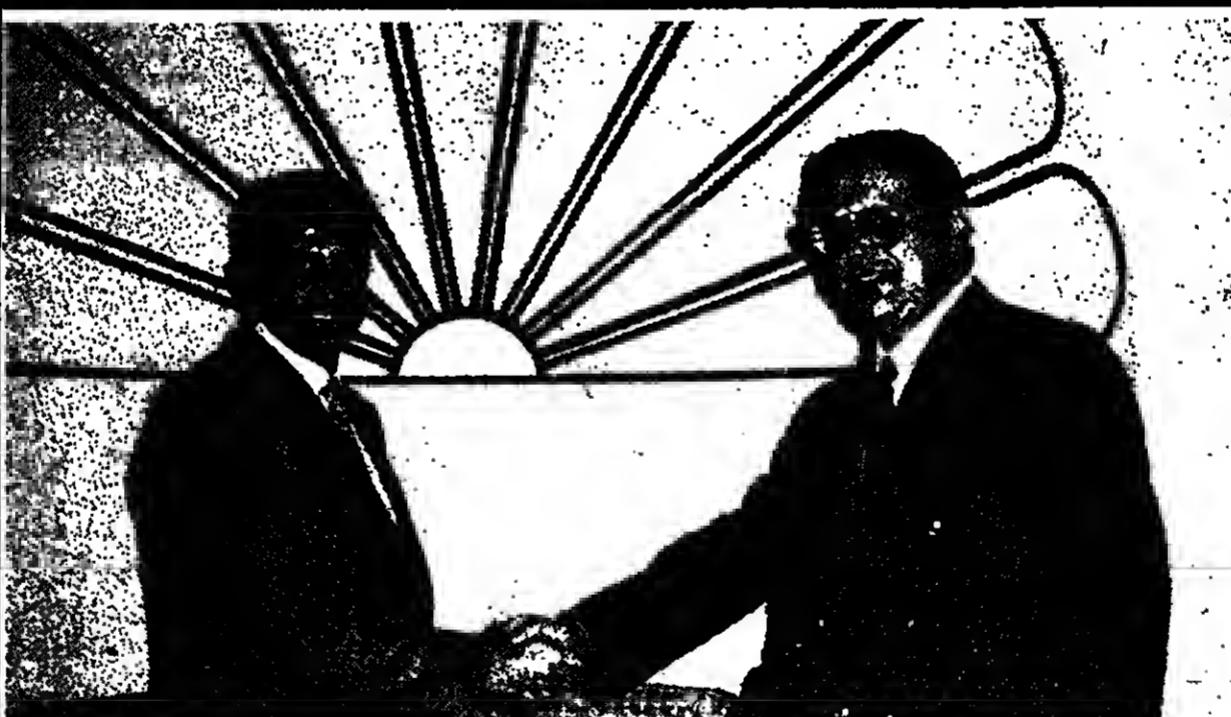
After waiting more than two hours as the day programme ran long, Graf needed

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اتفاقية تعاون هندسية

بين شركة بولنديه واثنة في مجال الخدمات الهندسية والاستشارية
لondon - وارسو - ت: ٢٠١٥٥٠٦٨٢٢٣٩١٥
الاردن - الزرقاء - ت: ٩٦٢٩٩٠٤٠٠٩٦٢٩٩٠٧٨



بول سيرفس شركه بولنديه واثنة في مجال الخدمات الهندسية والاستشارية تأسست سنة ١٩٦٦ ، وتعتبر شركه بول سيرفس مكتبه الهندسى امام القريوتي .
عمليات تقنية وامداد المياه ، الصرف الصحى ، معالجة مياه الصرف الصحى والصناعي ، معالجة القمامه والغابات الصالحة ، عطارات الطانه وعملياتها ، الري والمشاريع الزراعية ، المشاريع الصناعية ، النقل ، المشاريع الطبية ، الاتصالات ، التطوير الحضري وخطيط المدن . وقروب بول سيرفس يقدم خدمات التشغيل والصيانة بالإضافة إلى برامج

تدريب التقنيين والهندسين ، وتراعي بول سيرفس في تصميم معادلتها ان توفر امكانية تعديتها محلياً ، مما يساعد على نقل التكنولوجيا وتخفيض الكلفة . وقد قام مكتب الهندسى اسماء القريوتي ممثله مديره العام

المهندس اسماء القريوتي بتوقيع اتفاقية تعاون هندسية مع بول سيرفس حيث وقعت عن الشركة السيد جورجيوس هيل ممثلها في سوريا ولبنان وذلك بتاريخ ٤١/١٢/٩٤ في فندق عمر بمصر السفير البولندي في

عمان والمحى التجاري في السفارة البولنديه للتعاون في المشاريع ذات الحاجة مثل هذه الخبرات المذكورة على اساس اتفاقيات هندسية ، خاصة

وأن مكتب اسماء القريوتي مصنف لدى نقابة المهندسين الاردنيين كمكتب هندسى استشارى فى اختصاصات الهندسة الاتشائية ، عمارة الابنية ، كهرباء القوى ، تلفظ و تكييف ، الطرق ، المياه والمجاري وادارة المشاريع مبنى عام ١٩٩١ و مؤهل لدى دائرة المطاعمات الحكومية

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Bids are to be submitted to the Secretary of Tendering Committee at the above address not later than 10:00 a.m. on Monday 17/7/1995 accompanied with a bid bond equal to 2% of the total value of the bid.

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Contractors who are interested to participate in this tender can obtain the tender documents from the Procurement Dept. at JEA — main building located between the 6th and the 7th Circles — Jabal Amman, against a non-refundable amount of JD 1000 for each set.

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Rabin: Assad wants more than Sadat got in return for peace

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was quoted in an interview published on Friday as saying he thought Syria was trying to get more from peace talks with Israel than Egypt did in a 1979 peace treaty.

Israel returned to Egypt all of the territory it seized from it in the 1967 Middle East war. In that war Israel also took the Golan Heights from Syria. Peace talks between Israel and Syria are stalled over the heights.

"I have a suspicion that (Syrian President Hafez Al) Assad wants to prove that he can get for peace more than (former Egyptian President Anwar) Sadat did," Israel's Haaretz newspaper quoted Mr. Rabin as saying.

"It's possible that he has to explain to himself and maybe to others, why he rejected Sadat's proposal in '77 to come with him to Jerusalem," Mr. Rabin said.

Mr. Rabin and Mr. Assad demanded security arrangements of equal depth on both sides of a future peace border.

"We have no intention at the moment to commit to Syria what Sadat got, and certainly no intention of discussing at all seriously the demand for geographic equality in security arrangements."

"Israel will not make any substantial concessions to allow the restart of negotiations with Syria," he told Haaretz.

Syria wants demilitarisation to cover an equal area on both sides, a call which Israel rejects on the grounds it is a smaller country. Damas-

cus is holding up the resumption of high-level military talks before a security deal.

Ambassador-level talks resumed last month to try to agree on security arrangements. The United States as the chief sponsor of the Middle East peace process had hoped the army chiefs would soon join the negotiations.

But Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sbarra said Thursday that the army chiefs would "not go to Washington to take part in the negotiations ... because there has been no agreement on security arrangements."

Syria's position was not a "mark of stubbornness," Mr. Sharra said. "No state can ask another to abandon this principle of equality which is internationally recognised."

On Friday, Mr. Rabin called on Japan to contribute to the Middle East peace process as he met Friday with a Japanese fact-finding mission touring the region.

Any Japanese contribution to strengthening peace and security in the Middle East will be welcome, especially if it goes to parties which have signed peace accords: Israel, Jordan, Egypt and the Palestinians," said Mr. Rabin, quoted by officials.

The delegation, which includes representatives of Japan's three ruling coalition parties, is in the region to investigate the possible deployment of Japanese troops as part of U.N. peacekeeping forces on the Golan Heights.

Mr. Rabin praised the "positive role" played by the U.N. Disengagement Observer Force, deployed on the Golan since 1974.

Militants kill 6 in attack on crowded Egypt street

MINYA (AFP) — Militants killed six people, including a child and two women, when they sprayed a crowded main street with automatic weapons fire in a southern Egyptian village on Friday, police said.

The attack, one of the bloodiest against civilians since a wave of violence began in 1992, bring to 736 the number of people killed since March 1992.

Three gunmen belonging to the outlawed Gamma Al Islamiya opened fire just before weekly noon prayers on the main shopping street of Nawa village, 300 kilometres south of Cairo in troubled Minya province, police said.

The street, which has been the scene of several attacks since militants began focusing their activities in Minya late 1994.

The attackers first shot dead a village guard, Saber Mahmoud Abdul Hakim, before killing Hosni Ali Ibrahim, a plumber who tried to stop their escape.

When people on the street rushed at the assailants they sprayed automatic weapons fire indiscriminately, killing a three-year-old girl, Asma Hassan Sayed, and Coptic Christian woman, Abla Nashid Tawfiq.

Another woman, Fathyia Abdul Halim, and her brother Ramadan were also killed in the gunfire.

The three militants were

masked and succeeded in escaping into nearby sugar cane fields at either end of the street.

However, witnesses recognised the three as villagers known for their connection to the Gamma — Nasser Hassan Akram, Mohammad Tawfiq and a third identified only as Rabia, police said.

The harvesting of sugar cane since December and the destruction of fields by police have forced the militants to come out of their hiding places and carry out attacks in towns and villages.

Meanwhile, another militant group, the Talaib Al Fatah, has threatened more attacks after 42 of its members, arrested in the Mediterranean port of Alexandria and the Nile Delta in December, went on trial Thursday in Cairo.

The armed wing of the group Al Jihad warned in a statement sent to Al Hayat newspaper that it "will not stand by in silence with its arms folded."

Two of its members are accused of the murder of a policeman and two Coptic Christians in February last year, while the others face charges of belonging to an illegal organisation and possessing arms.

Twenty-two members have been sentenced to death since December 1992 and more than half of them have already been executed.

The three militants were



Palestinian Catholics carry a cross during the Good Friday procession reenacting the crucifixion of Jesus Christ through Jerusalem's Via Dolorosa (AFP photo)

Thousands retrace Christ's route

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Thousands of Christians, some lugging heavy wooden crosses, others video cameras, marched through Jerusalem's walled Old City on Good Friday to retrace Christ's steps towards crucifixion.

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Mr. Rabin praised the "positive role" played by the U.N. Disengagement Observer Force, deployed on the Golan since 1974.

This year's ritual came amid heightened tension following a wave of attacks on Israelis by militants. Israel sealed off the West Bank and Gaza Strip to prevent violence, which meant only a few hundred Palestinian Christians with special permits reached Friday's procession.

"It's not right that Christians should not be allowed to come," said Ibrahim Kandalat, in charge of Christian affairs in Yasser Arafat's self-government.

Major Elise Shazar, spokeswoman for Israel's military government in the West Bank, said permits were given to all Palestinian Christians who applied. She said she did not know how many entry permits were issued.

Additional police were deployed throughout Arab East Jerusalem, and hundreds of paramilitary border policemen flanked the Good Friday procession.

The pilgrims moved past Arab merchants selling souvenirs, such as miniature crucifixes, rosaries and crowns of thorns.

"There are lots of people, but they don't shop. Good Friday is good for the soul, but bad for business," said merchant Adnan Dakak.

A group of American tourists from La Brea, California, reenacted Christ's last journey. One wore a crown of thorns, his arms covered with fake blood. He was accompanied by two whip-carrying "Roman soldiers."

"This is tremendous. We

are following in Christ's footsteps, in his agony, it is one thing to do it in your own church, but it hasn't got the same depth of feeling as being in the actual spot," Mr. Compton said.

This year's large crowds contrasted with the trickle of tourists who came during the 1987-1993 Palestinian uprising against Israeli rule in the occupied lands. Tourism has boomed since Palestinians and Israelis reached a peace accord in 1993.

"It's a holy day and we would like to see all believers allowed to come on a holy day."

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France, U.S. accuse Milosevic of blocking peace proposal

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — France joined the United States on Friday in accusing Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic of frustrating international peace efforts in Bosnia.

Public statements by the two countries were seen as an admission by the big power contact group, of which they are members, that it had failed to persuade Mr. Milosevic to back their latest plan to end the Bosnian war.

His refusal to cooperate is a blow to United Nations hopes of extending a frayed ceasefire between Bosnian Muslims and Serbs which expires in fortnight.

French foreign ministry spokesman Richard Duval told reporters in Paris: "President Milosevic bears responsibility for the degradation of the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. We continue to run up against an obstinate position on his part."

Mr. Milosevic met envoys of the contact group countries — which also include Britain, Russia and Germany

— this week but rebuffed their offer to suspend sanctions against Yugoslavia in return for his recognition of Bosnia and Croatia.

The Serbian leader, who has recently been treated respectively by the contact group as a potential peacemaker, wants sanctions lifted without conditions.

U.S. State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said on Thursday: "It is our assumption that he is not interested in (the plan)."

Meanwhile, Bosnian Serbs are brutally expelling more Muslim civilians from their homes and subjecting peacekeepers to unacceptable harassment, officials complained Friday.

Earlier, a French peacekeeper died after being shot by a sniper while travelling through a front-line neighbourhood Friday morning. On Thursday night, Serbs fired on French peacekeepers at a U.N. observation post, drawing return fire.

Even as Bosnia's battle-

fields quieted temporarily Friday, accusations of human rights violations and attempted Serb intimidation of the United Nations grew louder.

The Serbian leader, who has recently been treated respectively by the contact group as a potential peacemaker, wants sanctions lifted without conditions.

Over the last three days, about 100 Muslim women, children and elderly have been rounded up from their homes in Bijeljina, in Serbia's northeast. After being robbed, they were forced to walk through snow and across front lines, to government-held Tuzla, said Nina Winquist, a spokeswoman for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). One elderly man died of exhaustion.

Ms. Winquist quoted aid workers in Bijeljina as saying Muslims were still being rounded up and more expulsions were expected, despite ICRC demands that they stop.

The White House said Friday that Iran might be the source of a new flood of arms to the Muslim-led Bosnian government, but denied that the United States was winking at the resupply effort.

Washington is considering a complete embargo on Iranian oil exports to U.S. companies, Iran's biggest customers which refine the crude and then sell it to European countries.

Republican Senator Alfonso D'Amato has also proposed a total trade embargo against Iran, but the administration has argued that it

100 dead in Russian bombing in Afghanistan

TALOQAN (Agencies) — Dozens of shops were razed and several houses destroyed in a Russian air attack Thursday on this northern Afghan city that left more than 200 people killed and wounded, officials said Friday.

Afghan officials and local residents, largely confirming figures broadcast on Thursday by Afghan radio, said around 100 people died in the raids while more than 120 were wounded.

At least eight Russian Sukhoi SU-27 jets dropped 24 bombs, including some cluster bombs and also fired 12 rockets on Talqan, capital of northern Takhar province, local police commander Pir Mohammad said.

The bombing was the heaviest since the Russians supporting the government in the neighbouring former Soviet republic of Tajikistan, launched attacks this week on bases of alleged Tajik rebels operating on Afghan soil.

Residents said at least two columns of shops were destroyed and the bazaar was deserted.

The jets also hit government buildings, including the provincial finance department and the local police headquarters.

Takhar province, bordering Tajikistan, is located 380 kilometres north of Kabul. Its provincial centre, Talqan, is only 60 kilometres from the border.

There have been numerous reports of Russian air strikes in northern Afghanistan in recent years, but Thursday's attack was perhaps the most intense.

The pilgrims moved past Arab merchants selling souvenirs, such as miniature crucifixes, rosaries and crowns of thorns.

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COLUMN 10

Comedian talks to Pope posing as a Canadian PM

MONTREAL (R) — A Quebec comedian said that he was able to talk to Pope John Paul II for 18 minutes by pretending to be Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien.

Pierre Brassard said he spoke to the Pope Tuesday in a telephone call broadcast on radio and, mimicking Mr. Chretien, told the Pope that he intended to amend the constitution to assure Canadians the right to life.

The Pope supposedly replied: "I hope that will help us during the (women's) conference in Peking." "Would you be prepared to come to Canada?" Mr. Brassard asked.

"Not right now," the Pope said, laughing. After asking the Pope when he would install a toy propeller on his cap, Mr. Brassard finally admitted that he was not a prime minister, but a radio announcer.

The raid came after a reported escalation in cross-border attacks by rebels hailing Tajikistan's Moscow-backed neo-communist government.

The bombing also followed an official Russian protest to Kabul Wednesday accusing the Afghan government of allowing Tajik rebels use of its territory for military operations against the former Soviet republic.

would have little effect unless other countries signed on.

In Tehran Thursday, President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani demanded Washington end its campaign to isolate his country.

"American leaders must reconsider their poor interpretations and mistaken actions as well as their historic errors on the subject of Iran," Mr. Rafsanjani said in a radio and television address.

He added that Iran was ready at any moment which it judges appropriate to break off all economic ties with the United States.

The Iranian president also slammed U.S. efforts "to establish economic ties with Iran while it clumsy puts pressure on others to secure the breaking-off of their ties with us."

His comments came shortly after Iran marked the 15th anniversary of the end of diplomatic ties with the United States.

Washington broke off relations on April 9, 1980, following the taking of 53 American hostages at the U.S. embassy in the Iranian capital shortly after the 1979 Islamic revolution.

In 1994 direct and indirect trade between the U.S. and Iran climbed above \$4 billion while American companies buy close to a third of Iranian crude oil.